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Camera KIM WERMUS
Sound KENNETH RAUNE
Editing STEEN SCHAPIRO
Music CHRIS JURIS (Mistress)
& JON MICKE (Dominans)
Produced by
THE DANISH FILM WORKSHOP
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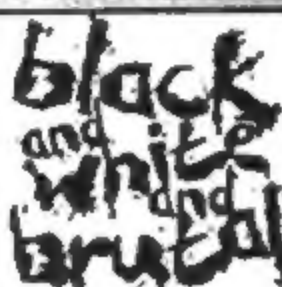
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provisional

SEE WHAT?!

jim sikora

WALLS IN THE CITY

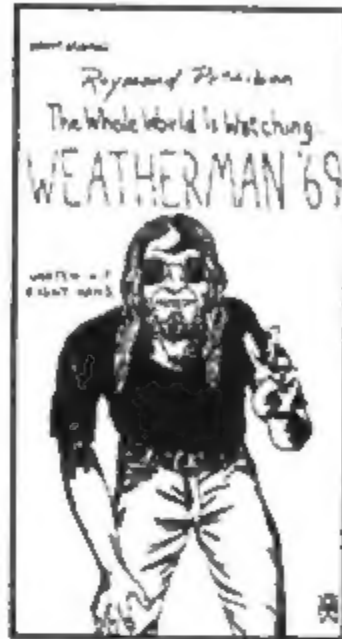


Paula Killen,
David Yow,
Tony Fitzpatrick,
Bill Cusack.

*Chicago-style
deep dish down
and out mind-
games.*

raymond pettibon

WEATHERMAN '69

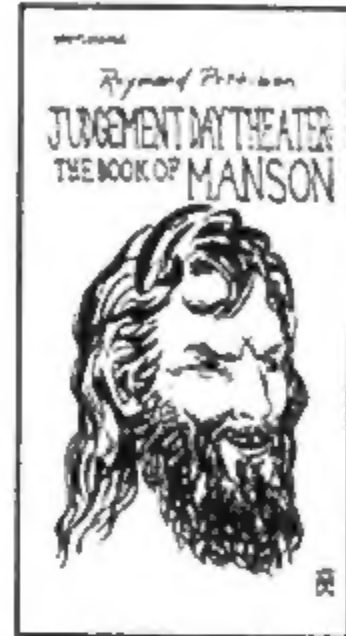


Mike Watt,
Thurston Moore,
Kim Gordon,
Dave Markey,
Joe Cole.

*Gordon doing
Dohrn doing
revolution doing
history doing
Pettibon.*

raymond pettibon

JUDGEMENT DAY THEATER THE BOOK OF MANSON



Robert Heck
Dave Markey
Dez Cadena,
Pat Ruthensma

*Manson-love
offers free
sanctuary to
who dwell in
Him.*

jim sikora

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GERALDO RIVERA



Paula Killen,
Lorri Jackson,
Craig White.

*1 of Film
Threat's "Must
Sees," plus 2
early Sikora
shorts.*

raymond pettibon

SIR DRONE



Mike Watt,
Mike Kelley,
Joe Cole.

*Punk Rock
Year Zero!
The Hippie
Holocaust!*

raymond pettibon

CITIZEN TANIA



Pat Ruthensma
Dez Cadena,
Dave Markey,
Joe Cole.

*How did Cinque
forge Tania of
Patty Hearst,
and can we
watch?*

SEEN.

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To all of the past contributors who, again, allowed us to use their hard work for freeeee!

COVER

A red-clad, goggled, gun-toting fantasy figure by JUSTICE HOWARD

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AND DESERT MOON

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7 MAIL You begged for naked pictures. Who are we to refuse?

10 EDITORIAL The long "see ya." (Sorta.)

13 SCAN New reviews of films that don't feature a Tarantino cameo.

38 FEST Dom and Dave have a blast at the too-hip
NY Underground Film Fest. Awesome. Cool.

44 PICTORIAL Lethal photos by black-and-white
specialist Justice Howard. Reveal goooooood!

50 VIDEO Underground punk heroes Pennywise have
their lives documented by unflinching filmmakers.

58 CULT Driver's Ed was never as much fun as RED ASPHALT.

64 SHOOTING SCHRAMM: Buttgerit proves there's life after NEKROMANTIK.



70 VIDEO Sonic Youth is caught on Super 8 by small
gauge specialist Dave Markey in THE YEAR PUNK BROKE.

77 ADS We're trying to pay the bills. You suffer.

80 SHOOTING Jonathan Reiss and NIN create a
bloody mess in the banned video HAPPINESS IS SLAVERY.

90 INTERVIEW Jim VanBebber and MY SWEET SATAN revisited.

96 SHOOTING Gore and the infamous RED by Williams.

105 PROFILE Col. Craig Baldwin (Ret.) and TRIBULA-
TION 99: ALIEN ANOMALIES UNDER AMERICA tell all.

110 CULT The Cinema of Transgression: an artistic
movement or so much whining and uninteresting trash?

128 PROFILE Leyland was once just an unknown
pedophile. Then CHICKEN HAWK happened. Be brave. Be proud...



44



13

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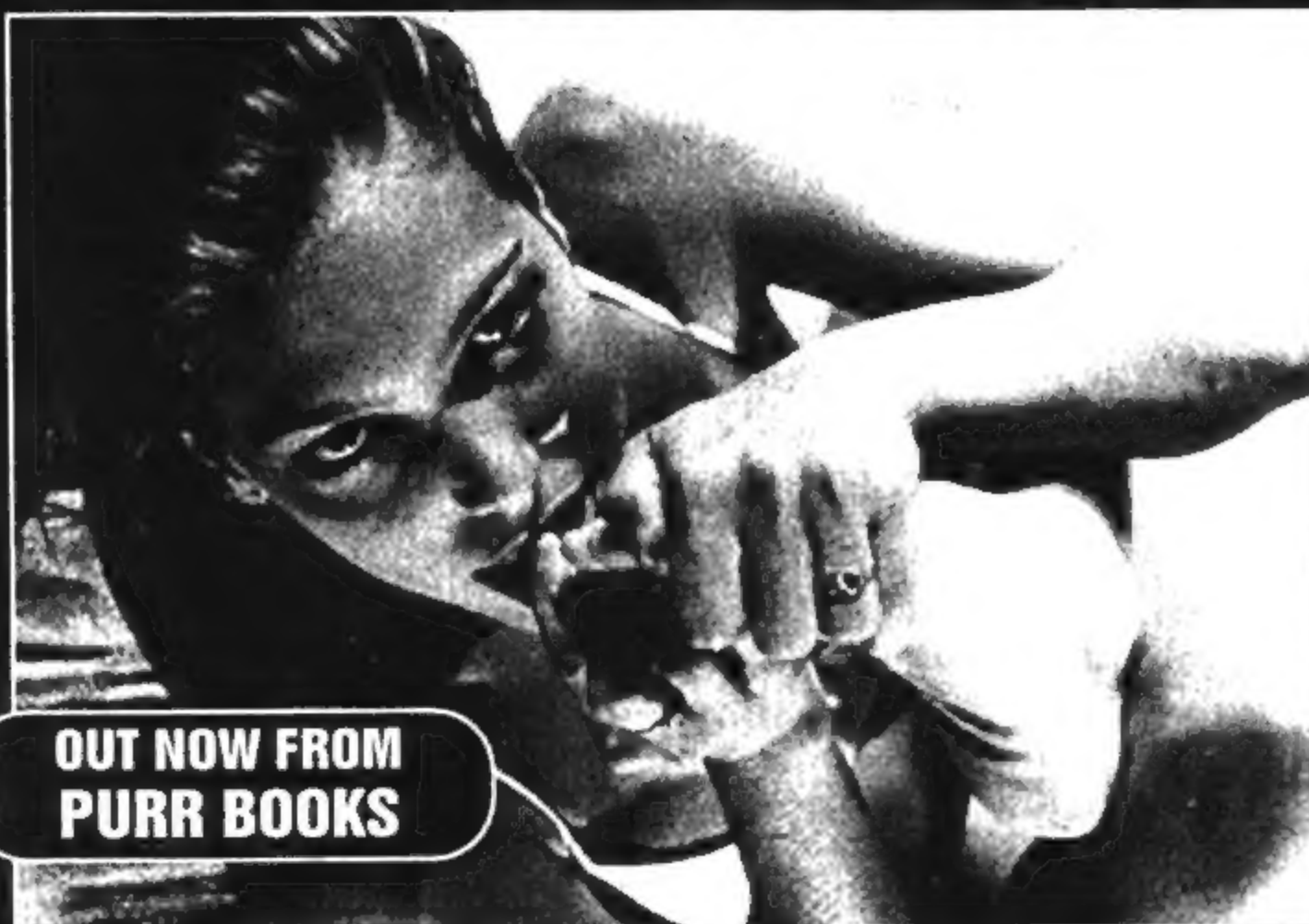
"The only thing except money and drugs worth living for..." Andy Warhol's Interview

RICHARD KERN

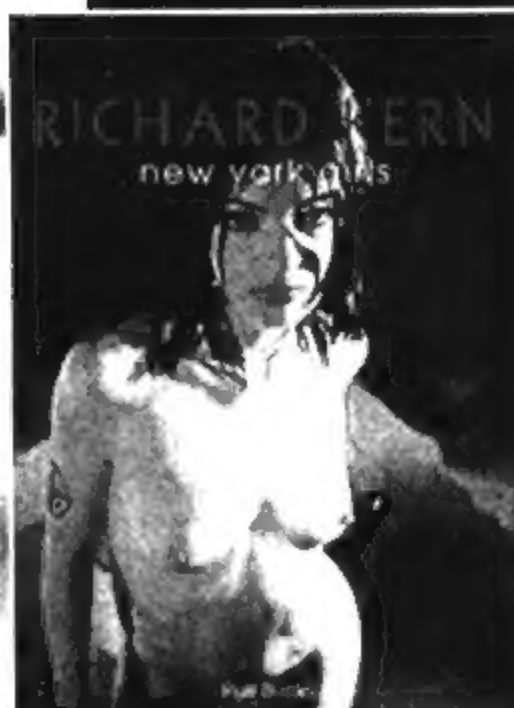
New York Girls

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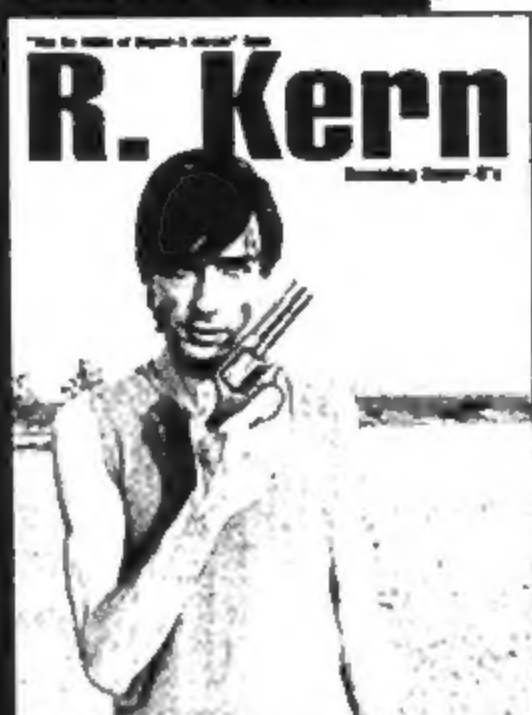


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WE'D LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THEM.

A professional shot
 of Erin courtesy of
 R. Kern.



Sioux Z and Erin in a very
 unprofessional shot.

YO DM!
 HERES AN OLD PHOTO
 OF ME & SIOUX. GOTTA
 LAY LOW FROM THEM
 FILMMAKERS, YA KNOW,
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 IDENTITY 'COS I'M A WUSS

BYE SEXO

[Signature]
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FILM THREAT
 VIDEO GUIDE

OK. GUYS!
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 PHOTO OF
 "SPINER WOMAN"
 HOW 'BOUT IT?
 RICH W.

Okay, we accept your offer. But before you send in your
 money, did you wanna make a bid on any photos in this
 issue? Oh, I don't know, maybe the one with the padlock?

SEXUALLY INSECURE

FTVG,
What's with the recent trend toward
porn and perversity? After the Sex
issue came the Documentary-theme
issue with just as much emphasis on
flesh-slapping. And "Chicken Hawk"?
Is this just the latest attempt to
shock your parents or are you
seriously promoting these perverts?
Get some help.

Vincent Ofrio
Austin, TX

Vincent,

Thanks for your concern. After seeing
Nekromantik, my parents stopped
caring. As for NAMBLA, see them
bang themselves in the video—they're
given plenty of rope by director Adi
Sideman.

SEXUALLY SECURE

Butt kissing? Shit just keep pushing
Super 8! Just wanted you to know
that Kern ain't the only "Barely
Legal" photographing perverts
reading Film Threat Video Guide.
Here's a print from my private
portfolio. Love the zine!

Don Ramirez
Fredrick, MD



LUCKY CHARMER OR LOSER?

Dave Williams:

Thanks for the coverage of the Lucky Charm Awards. It's great to get
mention in your magazine.

A few points:

We're not a film market. We don't have dealer's tables. It's great that
other festivals offer this, but we're not that kind of festival.

The LCAs were created to highlight works shot on video: VHS, Hi8,
SVHS. We try to fill the gap and offer an outlet for works that may not
be getting screened at other festivals. Some of the entries are programs
that were originally created for cable access and some of the entries are
very low-budget. Although we've accepted work shot on film, starting
in '95 we will only accept work originally shot on video.

This year we were able to screen works submitted from all over the U.S.,
videos that Seattle audiences have read about in *FTVG* throughout the
year, but wouldn't normally get a chance to see, such as *A Doorstop
Documentary*, and clips from *Age of Demons & Death Magic*. Other
works include *Cybertech*, *Deuteronomy*, *Rosa Mi Amour*, *America's
Hunkiest Home Videos* and the feature *Vampire Trailer Park*.
We're truly thrilled when we get videomakers to attend the screenings,
and hope to feature more full-length works for our 4th year.

Kelly W. Hughes
The Lucky Charm Awards
Seattle, WA

Kelly,
Thanks for your letter. You
seem to miss the point Merle
Bertrand was making in his
unrelenting diatribe against
your little shindig. Now, while
we are barely a magazine, that
is no excuse for you to be barely
a film festival—especially
when you have the audacity to
offer awards to people who live
hundreds of miles away and
know they're going to break
their ass to actually show up
and accept your miserable
trinkets. Do us all a favor and
take some cues from The New
York or Chicago Underground
Fests—they deliver.

NAGGING BASTARDS & THE BIG SELL-OUT

THERE IS NOTHING WORSE IN LIFE THAN a nag. Some of you had nagging parents, some nagging girlfriends or boyfriends, and some just endure nagging losers who invade your life for their own infantile or ultimately pointless reasons. This third category of nag is what we often have to put up with here at FILM THREAT VIDEO GUIDE. Now before I alienate anyone, let me preface this rant by saying that we honestly appreciate all the filmmakers who submit their films to us for consideration. Hey, it makes my job easier and Dominic Griffin appreciates your generosity as well—especially when he is scrambling for material.

But back to our subject, let's remember that nobody likes being nagged, called incessantly, faxed endlessly or provoked unnecessarily. Especially not with the same fucking question we hear every day: "ARE YOU GOING TO WRITE ABOUT MY FILM?"

Let's get one thing straight. The answer is: "YES, WHEN WE CAN. THERE ARE A LOT OF THEM TO GET THROUGH. ESPECIALLY BAD ONES..."

Your phoning, reminding and prodding is not going to speed that process up, and in fact, it may just slow it down. But we will get to it, whether the outcome of that destined meeting be good, bad or indifferent.

• • •

Regarding the second half of this editorial's headline, you may have noted that this incredibly-late issue (while jammed with extra pages) is composed mostly of reprinted stories from great issues of the past. Frankly, this was done in effort not only to fill space, but facilitate a change here at FTVG. Last May, I took a full-time editorship at American Cinematographer magazine—finally getting the REAL job my mother always dreamed of. At the same time, publisher Chris Gore fully retired from his FILM THREAT activities and took a job at Digital Pictures, a CD-ROM company located just south of beautiful San Francisco.

That's right, he packed up the truck and moved out of Beverly Hills that is...

So what will become of the GUIDE now that we have limited time to spend on this incredibly labor-intensive endeavor? Well, suffice to say that we're weighing our options—with the full intention of continuing both the magazine and our video distribution business.

But because of this change, we have had to redirect our attention and cut back on a number of projects we had both been involved in. One such thing was the video ordering segment of FILM THREAT VIDEO. After long fail-

ing to provide a workable "order-by-phone" scheme, we have reverted back to doing business strictly by mail-order, fax and via the modern miracle of E-mail. So please, stop wasting your time trying to break through on the old 800 line. It's gone.

Though our addresses and fax number are incessantly printed in the following pages, I will supply them once again here (for the moronic): FILM THREAT VIDEO, PO Box 3170, Los Angeles, CA 90078-3170, Los Angeles, CA 90078. (818) 848-5956 fax. Or by E-mail to DWThreat@aol.com. (Yes, that's America Online).

Just include any info by fax or E-mail that you would on any order. (See page 133 of this issue for details.)

Lastly on this subject, I remind the attentive that FTVG and FTV are not part of the vast Larry Flynt publishing empire. We never were. This whole show has been a strictly indie project run by Gore, myself and executive publisher Phil Vigeant. So don't waste your time calling the offices of FILM THREAT magazine—which is owned by Flynt. They cannot help you. You're stuck with us.

• • •

I should mention also that the reprinted articles in this issue contain "facts" that are no longer factual. Things change with time. And while some small elements have been updated with new text, those pages are essentially intact as first published.

• • •

As a final note, I want to specially thank executive editor Dominic Griffin for pulling this issue together. Without his incessant nagging (The bastard!), this issue would never have been finished as it was intended to be—fat. Also up for an award of merit is photographer Justice Howard, who not only provided the cover shot and some nifty material for the inside, but kept the gears grinding with her calls.

I can now say this issue of the GUIDE is done.



David E. Williams
Editor-in-Chief

WooDoo SOUP

"Greg Lewolt gives us an unforgettable horror-comedy with hot babes. This film has a style all it's own, unparalleled to any under or above ground."

Chris Meyer
Subculture Magazine

The adventures of Ralph "The Cook" and his exploits with the Vampires of California

"Mel Brooks... With hooters! Has something for everyone!"

Tony Biner
Celluloid Nightmare

starring

Heidi Lynn

Penthouse Pet

Joanna Taylor

Penthouse Pet

Corrie Singer

Playboy Lingerie

Amy Hastings

Playboy Lingerie

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MONDO
APOCALYPSE

SCAN

A complete guide to the films and videos sent to us that weren't immediately turned into "blanks." See page 35 for our submission form or just send your film to FTVG, PO Box 3170, Los Angeles, CA 90078-3170. Remember address and phone info!

Edited by Dominic Griffin

TREACHEROUS PLANET

Los Bears Productions
80mins/16mm & Video



Inventive yet long-winded, this compilation vid had to be broken up by segment.

DR. TRANXENE, I'M READY NOW...

A horribly diseased woman, Mary, who, dreadfully sick and disfigured, resembles a healthy Kathy Bates, enlists the aid of one Dr. Tranxene to end her miserable existence. A parody of the lovely Dr. Jack Kevorkian, Dr. Tranxene has a decidedly more self-serving sadistic side—he smiles giddily as hunks of Mary's patchy hair come out in his hands. The good doctor mentions to Mary that in the past, he has assisted suicide to patients with Carbon Monoxide, which being both painless and gentle, allows the suffering victim some final dignity in death which he or she lacked in life. Mary seems to welcome the idea of a dignified end, but Dr. Tranxene has other things in mind.

Explaining that Carbon Monoxide deaths are too tame these days and no longer get

Sue Rock is treacherous for sure.



him coverage in the newspapers, he decides another course of action is appropriate in Mary's case and opts to hook jumper cables to her head. As her body is flooded with electricity, she coughs blood. The good doctor rips her already patchy hair out with his teeth and eats the flesh off her skull



as her body is racked with spasms. Finally (once he is full I imagine), Dr. Tranxene shoots Mary in the head. A fun, cheerful little film which is sure to delight the whole

family. Take the kids

The first, and probably the best film on this tape, *Dr. Tranxene, I'm Ready Now...* is reasonably consistent and bears the distinction of actually having some sort of a plot. A feat which writer/director David Mumford has some degree of difficulty achieving with the other shorts here

UNDERCOVER CHRISTIAN

Minister Mike and Linda Hadhicks go undercover to a gay bar called the Ripcord, to ferret out homosexuals who they think are plotting to overthrow the world. All Linda winds up with is make-up and hairdressing tips and Minister Mike ends up on his knees performing oral favors on a long line of common leather queens that patronize the establishment. A bit ho-hum.

BEING SUE

A very depressed woman mopes around her house for many hours in this well-filmed, but uninterestingly written short. Sue mopes in the kitchen, she mopes in the bathroom—anywhere there's floor space, she mopes. As she mopes, we hear a VO of her pathetic, rhetorical, existential musings. The film is dark, and

moody which, perhaps in itself, is the cause of Sue's depression. My theory is Sue suffers from seasonal light disorder and if the lighting director doused her with some UV, like a begonia, she'd perk right the hell up.

Eventually Sue gets so tired of living (it's a hard life sulking all the time) that she starts cutting slices in her forearm with a kitchen knife. An interesting take on suicide considering most people prefer to cut the wrist where some major blood vessels actually reside. But Sue has to prove her boorishness until the very end and hack away mercilessly at her forearm flexors which she could slice until doomsday and not bleed to death. Then she pours Drano into the wounds and starts biting them. Then she actually *drinks* a half-gallon of Drano, hacking and spitting and crying, and whining all the while.

Shortly thereafter, she pukes her guts up in a vomit scene

which looks impressively real. Kudos to Sue and director Mumford—unless Sue is a real-life bulimic in which case kudos to her and to hell with Mumford.

I was a bit put off at first that drinking all that Sodium Hypochlorite didn't even phase Sue let alone kill her (I've choked down pizza that caused me more gastrointestinal distress than a beaker full of acid caused her). Sue's misery was so pointless and self-indulgent that I kept hoping she'd bite the big one, and assumed that once she hit the drain cleaner that would be her swan song.

Upon reflection I remembered that stinky Drano crap can't even clear out the hair and soap and filth from my bathroom pipes, so why should it cook Sue's innards? In the end she doesn't die (which in Hollywood terms means there's room for a sequel; maybe she discovers she has an affinity for drinking toxic

cleaning fluids and takes to the road in a depressed-one-woman show spraying assorted noxious poisons into her melancholy gullet.) The film closes with Sue curled up like a shrimp, lying in some structure that's either a huge crib or a drained hot tub (I'm not sure—as I mentioned, it was dark), still depressed. *Whatever it is Sue honey, get over it. Get a job, find someone to chew on your privates, or have your ovaries removed.*

IMAGES OF HEAVEN

An elderly scientist is shot through the head by a pack of ultra-heterosexual guido-esque environmental terrorists who look like used car salesmen from Queens. They are after the super-secret *Zenix Pro-Z 425* toxic nerve gas which the late scientist created with the aid of a grant from the US Federal Government. (Millions for nerve gas, but they put up a fight about "Piss Christ"!)

The scientist has protected the

entrance to the building containing his nerve gas with an electric field so the terrorists are unable to get inside. Determined, they capture his son Chris, and inject him with an hallucinogenic drug to get him to reveal the secret of the building's defenses. After a lengthy hallucination, Chris spills his guts to super bad-guy Brad, and having then outlived his usefulness, is disposed of. We assume the environmental terrorists get the nerve gas, spray it over the country and turn us all into liberals as we fade to black.

TREACHEROUS PLANET

A masterpiece of utter pointlessness featuring lesbo shenanigans, vibrators, chain saws, opium suppositories and bondage. (Believe me, I make it sound like more fun than it is.) It opens with very cool music and video effects and goes downhill from there and continues to showcase David Mumford's worn-on-his-shirt-



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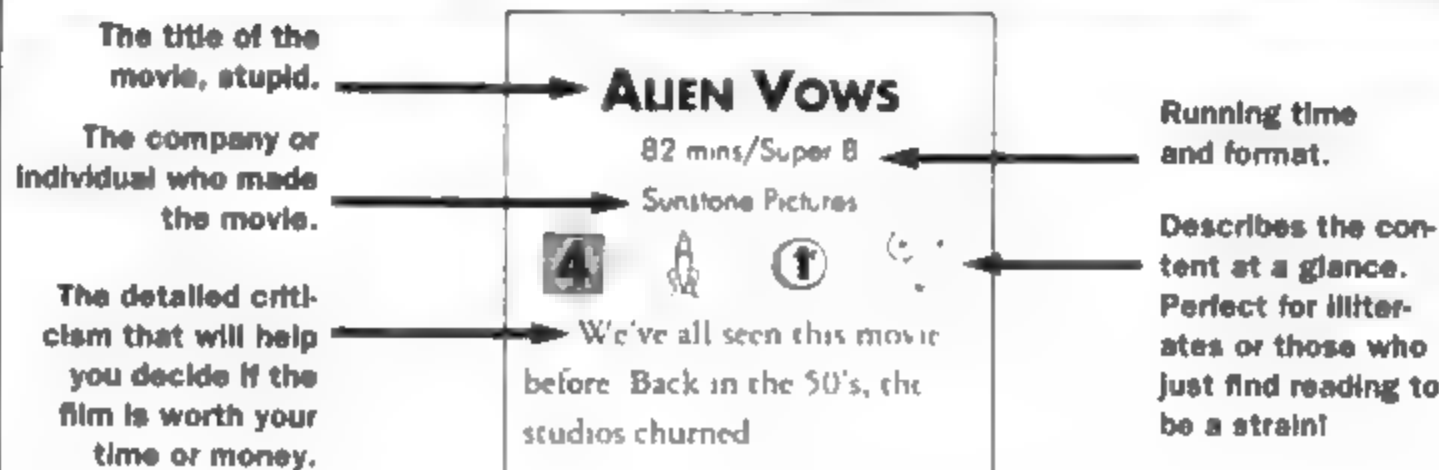
RATINGS

- 10** Perfect! A must for any collection and worth twice the price!
- 9** Excellent. Definitely worth seeing and showing off to friends.
- 8** Great. We're jealous and wish we'd thought of it.
- 7** Very Good. Would get the filmmaker an "A" at U.C.L.A.
- 6** Good. But not "very good." Wait until you have extra cash.
- 5** A few good scenes, but only at the 7-Eleven security-cam level.
- 4** Dull. But almost interesting at scan speed.
- 3** Trance-inducing. Not interesting, even at scan speed.
- 2** Bad. You have a new blank tape for your growing 90210 collection.
- 1** Sucks! No explanation needed as you've probably gone comatose.

CLASSIFICATIONS

No Budget	Horror	Action	Classic
Low Budget	Nudity	Subversive	Animated
Big Budget	Arty	Surreal	Sci-Fi
Comedy	Music	Documentary	Pop Culture
Drama	Music Video	Instructional	Compilation

READING OUR REVIEWS



sleeve odd obsession with characters eating and drinking strange and poisonous things (This time, isopropyl alcohol and a hunk of the beaten woman's head off the club that telled her, Drano in *Being Sue*, gasoline in *Element of Crime*, a woman's scalp in *Dr. Transzene*, *I'm Ready Now*, and blood in several of the films.)

Basic plot: A bearded freak with a tambourine and a nun with a club, beat and kidnap a blonde woman who is conveniently wandering alone on some deserted railroad tracks and hang her from their ceiling like a provolone. Beyond this, it's impossible to deduce anything else as far as plot goes, but then I'm admittedly a slave to the Western concept of coherent, structured thought. (Perhaps if I smoked some Buffalo doodie, pierced my body and did a dance I might be better able to summarize the film for you.) Actor Douglas Schlachter (playing the character of Eugene Axe) should be tried right alongside

O.J. for his crimes against thespianism. A totally senseless waste of film.

REMEMBERING MICHAEL

A light hearted tribute to Houston writer/performer Michael Morrow full of short clips that (surprise) make little sense to me. The film turns seriously morose when the subject turns to AIDS and the lives and deaths of gay men. I have never heard of Michael Morrow, but can assume since he is having tribute paid to him that he is dead. (No one ever give's a rat's ass about you when you're alive—it's when you bite the big one that everyone realizes you were more than just five bucks worth of chemicals wrapped in ten yards of epithelial tissue.)

For those concerned, the solemn mini-interview at the end with Morrow is the strongest couple of minutes on the whole tape. It reminded me of several interesting PBS documentaries I have seen in the past.

ALTERNATE RE-VIEW

TREACHEROUS PLANET

88min/VHS

Los Bears Productions

8

A hot blonde cheerleader takes the wrong way home. As she's making her way along the railroad tracks, a strange little troll approaches, twitching and sniveling his own private mating call. He's quickly joined by an angry nun and, within seconds, they beat our helpless victim unconscious and kidnap her. Thus begins David Mumford's *Treacherous Planet*. From inexplicable dream sequences to bizarre non sequiturs, Mumford achieves quite a task in the jaded, shock-for-the-sake-of-shock world of underground entertainment and actually surprises. As the tale of Mom's attempts to find her little girl unfold, the viewer is continually diverted by odd tangents, one of which features a brief but admittedly arousing spanking fantasy. It's with this kind of kitchen-sink approach that the few gags that fall short of their targets are proven to be a hell of a lot less annoying. The production value also aids to the eclecticism of the storyline; very polished, very professional, and appropriate usage of cheesy computer animation. Oh, did I mention that there's a great spanking scene?

—Jay Hollinsworth

CARNY TALK



and other amusing anecdotes

By

ROBERT WILLIAMS

CONTENTS

1. A Violent Encounter
2. Carny Talk
3. The Great Fecal Matter
4. Motorcycles and Hot Rods
5. Hospital Still Berns
6. The Blow Job
7. Sunshine and Health

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REVIEWS

Based on this film, I think Mumford might make an interesting biographer, and this is a field in which his work could conceivably be more coherent (assuming his subjects are) since he wouldn't be doing any of the scripting, just chopping together other people's more logical and decipherable thoughts.

ELEMENT OF CRIME

Though professionally filmed and edited with quality and some style like all the short films on this tape, *Element of Crime* strives desperately to be the most meaningless and inane film in the *Los Bears Productions Collected Works*. And with great success. This, thankfully, very short work has absolutely no intelligible point of view and is merely a showcase for Mumford's great state of artistic mental confusion. The one sentence description of this particular film (presumably written by Mumford) on the

video box reads, "...Explore the mind of Ahknaten, who incinerates monks, amongst other things." Ahknaten is a funny-looking bald man who is seen only *very briefly* licking blood off a woman's face, and reveling in having gasoline poured all over his body and in his mouth by The Arsonist (played by Paul Locklear).

Each of these two scenes feels totally superfluous, and adds nothing to the continuity of the film. Come to think of it, none of the scenes in the *entire film* add anything to the piece, and the director could have greatly strengthened and streamlined this work if he never made it in the first place. It could have been brilliant; a masterpiece of pure avant garde simplicity, existing only in title, but unfortunately Mumford chose to cloud his work with some of his ideas. (NYU grads pay attention here.)

Allegedly, this film is about Ahknaten, yet he is hardly

seen. There is no mention of his incinerating monks, or anyone else for that matter, and we certainly don't get to explore his mind. (Not that I was really dying to anyway ...) The film's attempts at humor fall utterly flat as the jokes have no actual connection to the story at hand. One example being the character of Dr. Frank Booth, described as the author of "*Stalin—Champion of the Underdog*." This book title is obviously supposed to be witty—but isn't—because it doesn't have any correlation to anything in the film. There is no connection for us to draw between Stalin and arson—or Stalin and anything for that matter. It merely gives the scriptwriter a chance to make us realize that he has, indeed, heard of Mr. Stalin and is aware that he was not a nice person. While that (*might*) cause a chuckle in a film about Communism, it really has no relevance to a flick about fire. David Mumford definitely has

technical talent and if someone put a coherent script in his lap, it is my opinion as an unprofessional, unpaid film reviewer that he could probably make a darn good film. Unfortunately, *Element of Crime*—and all the other films on this tape—are one giant mass of plot-non-sequiturs riddled with inane statements and dialogue like, 'Fire epitomizes man's disturbing need to feel superior' (I'm afraid to even analyze that statement) and, 'It's certainly inconvenient to consider a universe without a God where life has no meaning above and beyond existing. We create our purposes, our goals, our afterlives. An arsonist by being an arsonist is simply meeting the needs of his agenda. Punish him, but do not condemn him, for the forces that drive him are the forces that drive all of us; all of us being human.'

Though one of the technically prettier collections I have

Boy meets girl. Boy loves girl. Boy bites girl. Boy kills girl. Boy misses girl. Ain't love grand?

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IN PRINT

Zine reviews by
Kevin Livingston

Bound for Hollywood

VOLUME II

BOUND FOR HOLLYWOOD VOLUME II

Harmony Concepts, Inc., P.O. Box 69976, Los Angeles, CA 90069

A chum of mine—he's a real sick fuck—recalled for me his all-time TV-viewing highlight. While tuning through the meager choices available, his trousers suddenly received a jolt; *Honey West*, a mid-60's detective drama starring

Anne Francis as a fetching female

P.I., had just begun. And, as my pal explained, this episode featured her bound and gagged in a chair against her will. She struggled and writhed, her diamond-cutter nipples poking through the tight sweater she just happened to be wearing—it was too doggone much for a virile male to resist. These are the strange kind of kicks found in the obsessive anthology of female bondage in movies and television, *Bound for Hollywood Volume II*. Lifted from the pages of *Bondage Life* magazine and reprinted in black and white on photocopy-style pages, this is the essential B/D freak's reference book. The 80 pages are packed with hundreds of listings and scores of photos and, as a bonus, two separate indexes of actresses and titles (from Adams, Maud, and Abduction all the way to Zambalist, Stephanie, and Zorro the Gay Blade).



VAMOS

P.O. Box 5871
Kansas City, MO 64171

Subtitled "Mad magazine: the next generation," the swaggers behind this ambitious attempt have swiped the typeface for their logo, and each issue costs just a buck (Cheap!) Yet, *Mad* mascot Alfred E. Neuman would no doubt respond, wearing his trademark shit-eating smile: "What -me worry?" *Vamos* is scarcely fit to be fish-wrap compared to the twisted humor magazine that

started it all, influencing everyone from Lenny Bruce to Letterman. Taken on its own merits, however, *Vamos* is quite funny. Issue #6 has as its cover the two Coreys ("Corey & Corey! We want more-y!")—a couple of cute Hollywood kids with the same name and taste for nose candy. And away we go as author Pat trails them on their messy descent from blockbuster motion pictures, slumber parties with Michael Jackson and banging Drew Barrymore to starring in low-rent, straight-to-video product like *Meatballs 4* and *National Lampoon's Last Resort* (a complete filmography of Messrs. Haim and Feldman is provided within) and being interviewed by our own Dominic Griffin. Sticking with the Mad theme, the Fonz, a goateed Ethan Hawke and Mr. T are mercilessly goaled on. And a good time was had by all.

TV GRIND

P.O. Box 14043
Chicago, IL 60614-0043

As if the world needed another do-it-yourself irritant, here comes *TV Grind*. This destitute man's *Spy* magazine has chosen the world's greatest invention (i.e. television, of course) to pick away at like an itchy scab. But somewhat less than critical analysis, the gals and fellows who've developed the *Grind* screed of "watching TV for all the wrong reasons" have a greater intent, convincing you how clever they are. And they're quite accomplished at it. In this good-looking collection of smarty-pants essays, mock-ads, comix strips and whatnot they strike all the necessary poses to see their base desires achieved. Maybe they should rethink this strategy because, according to the *Doc Johnson* dictionary, 'clever' is "a low word applied to anything a man likes." And these fuckers are awash in self-esteem. Anyhow, I didn't mean to go off on a rant—and the back cover color photo of the *Bonanza* cast secretly flipping the bird to their viewers is worth the \$2.25 alone.



GENETIC DISORDER

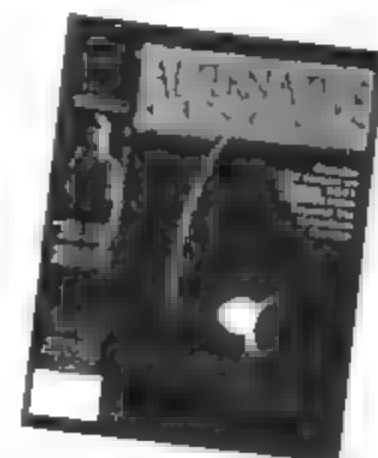
P.O. Box 151362
San Diego, CA 92175

At what point does a publication cease being a 'zine'? How 'bout when they carry more ads than *Bam* magazine? Or the editors receive financial help from a semi-success like *Maximum Rockroll* (to finally print a four-color cover). Well, its attitude that really matters and *Genetic Disorder* seems to have the spirit. Issue 13's theme is urban pranks—you know, the burning bag of dogshit on the porch; perverted sex calls to the mom of a girl you really like; spiking the food of somebody you know (and dislike) with LSD and, my favorite, seeing what can be shoved up the ass of a passed-out friend at a keg party. These sweetly sentimental remembrances of suburban life should be enough—but wait, there's more: a loser's guide to the seamy side of San Diego. Good bars for serious drinkers, cheap eats to sop up the alcohol and the most promising spot to pick-up a hooker. News you can use.

ALTERNATIVE CINEMA

P.O. Box 6573
Akron, OH 44312-0573

Abandoning any sense of credibility, JR Bookwalter's *Alternative Cinema* has sold out, turned to the Dark Side, and finally pandered to the lowest of low after a mere five installments—with the latest issue featuring *Forrest Gump* and *Generations* in glorious black-and-white newsprint. Sure, there are still some twinges of it's former self, with JR's upcoming video-shot shocker *The Sandman* lurking between the Hollywood PR shots of Hanks playing a retard and rug-wearing Shatner—but it just ain't *natural*. Come back, JR—or shoot it and put AC out of its misery.



—DEW

NAKED PUNKERS SUGER RAY COME CLEAN ON VIDEO

*Just because you happen to be in a band
and live together, does that mean you
should have your own TV show?*



Suger Ray: A 10 on the Level of Gayness?

MARILYN MANSON, THE BAND WHOSE "Lunchbox" video was documented in FTVG #13, has what they call the "Degree Of Gayness Scale." It works like this: if two men are alone in a room with only their underwear on, it rates as a 5. However, if the same two men are listening to Morrissey, it's upgraded to a 6. Well, according to Suger Ray lead singer, Mark McGrath and McG (their producer, svengali and documentarian) the Howard Stern-fave punk band lies somewhere between a 9 or 10 since they tend to get naked with each other quite frequently. This tendency has been well documented in their insightful and oft hilarious Electronic Press Kit which was recently sent out to members of the media. Shot on Hi-8 by McG over the course of 6 months while the band were recording their eclectically punk debut disc, *Lemonade*

And Brownies, for Atlantic records, the mini-documentary primarily showcases the talents of the band off stage as they live together in a large pad in the swank Larchmont suburb of Los Angeles. "There goes the neighborhood" is a cry I'm sure the band has oft heard.

Although Sugar Ray love a beer or 10, the 24-year-old McG on the other hand has never even touched a drop. "I'm Irish, so I'm inherently an alcoholic. If I drink the real me will come out. I'm afraid to know who I really am," he notes. But McG's rationale doesn't stop here. "I don't know how to get a light reading. I'm much more concerned with content," he quips with regard to his filmmaking experience, "but I have had some pretty good luck with exposure."

Suger Ray frontman McGrath, who sadly bears an uncanny resemblance to actor Ethan Hawke and says whenever a new Ethan-flick comes out, chicks are always mistaking him for the thespian, maintains that he and his band only become naked

whenever they get drunk. However, he did admit that the band pretty much gets blotto every night. Along with room and band mates, Rodney Sheppard (guitar), Murphy Karges (bass) and Stan "The Naked Drummer" Frazier (drums), the short docu captures the Monkees-on-acid lifestyle they now live.

But why document it?

More than most, the visual elements of rock n' roll have played an important role in the evolution of this young band thus far. Before they even had a hint of an interest from any record company weasel, the band mustered together every farthing they could and shot themselves a professional-looking video on 35mm. With only \$3,700 in the kitty, director Kevin Kerslake ("Smells Like Teen Spirit") wasn't available so that was when their friend and designated driver, McG volunteered his services as director.

**"MAN, THIS BUSINESS IS SUPPOSED
TO BE FUN. WE'RE FED UP WITH ALL
THE WHINERS AND PEOPLE WHO
CONSTANTLY FEEL SORRY FOR
THEMSELVES. THIS IS THE GREATEST
JOB IN THE WORLD."**

— SINGER M. MCGRATH

Although, he openly admits that he hadn't any idea—let alone experience—what he was doing, the finished product made its way to an A&R head at Atlantic. Shot for the song "Caboose"—it's a nickname for the female reproductive organ—the video so impressed the label exec that the band was ordered to be signed despite the fact that

they had yet to be seen live. "We're the luckiest band in the world," concludes McGrath.

With this kind of luck on tape, the band decided to continue when it came to documenting the record. With McGrath admitting that there's no way he can record or play sober, most of the tape consists of the fun-lifestyle-advocates getting drunk—and being drunk—as they go about the important business of making a record. Stan cooks dinner naked or alternately tosses a croquet stick around the house, McGrath struts around in his jock-strap, Murphy taps ash into his mouth and Rodney confesses that he was a cast member on *Land Of The Lost* for 6 episodes, where he

appeared as fur-boy Chaka. His stint as a child actor kinda helps explain why he is a twisted adult but for the rest of them...

"We're a reactionary band," defends McGrath, "Man, this business is suppose to be fun. We're fed up with all the whiners and people who constantly feel sorry for themselves. This is the greatest job in the world." It was this feeling that inspired the potentially controversial tune "Danzig Needs A Hug," from their debut disc. Always looking to prick people's interest—or perhaps other parts of the anatomy—the band even convinced ex-*Baywatch* and *Charles In Charge* babe, Nicole Eggert, to appear naked on the cover of their album.

Even though Atlantic wasn't exactly thrilled at first to release the Press Kit to media, the band has had a tremendous response to it. And it could've been better. Apparently, according to both McG and McGrath, mucho sexually related material had to be left on the cutting room floor. "Well, you know..." laughs McGrath. The reasons for leaving sexually explicit footage off their tape are understandable but McGrath may have had a more selfish reason. The next video to be shot by McG for the band is a cut called "10 Seconds Down." "I'm really bad in the sack," notes McGrath sincerely. "The problem is I only last about 10 seconds and I can only do it once. Afterwards, I immediately need the remote control so I can switch on Sports Center."

Inspired by Rick Rubin to get into the music business, McG has a lot riding on the next Sugar Ray project. "I'm terribly jealous of what Spike Jonze has achieved. I think he changed everything with his "Buddy Holly" video. If my next video doesn't beat that—I'm quitting the business."

—Dominic Griffin

EXCLUSIVE GIVEAWAY!

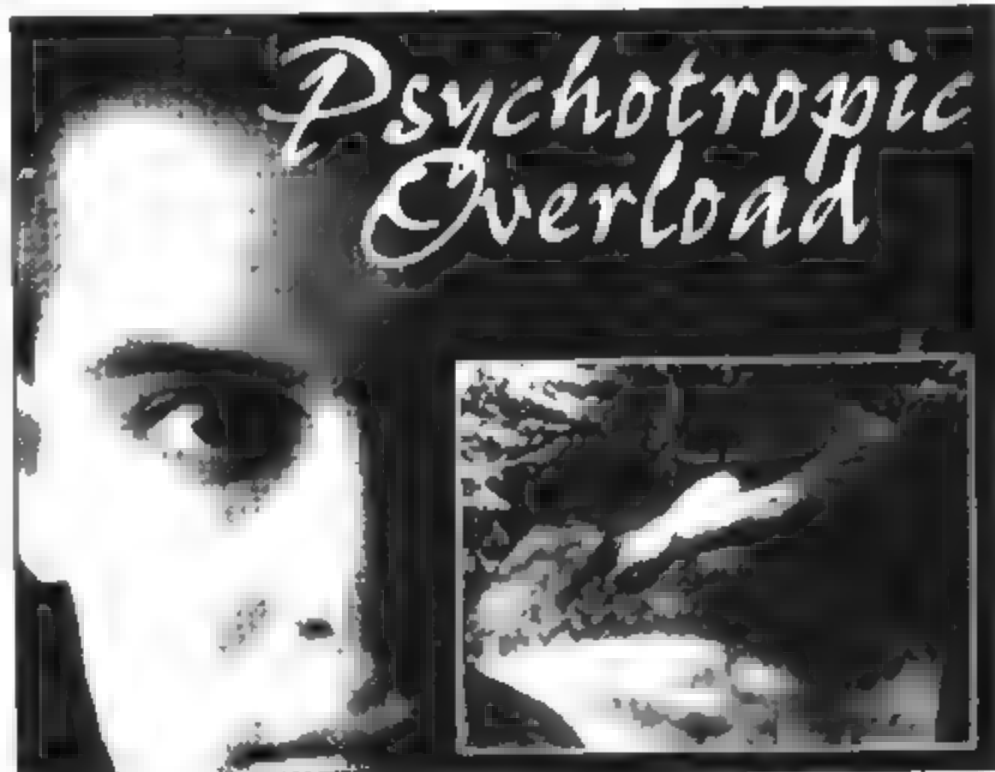


So you want a copy of the limited (and totally unavailable to public) edition of the Sugar Ray video? Well, we need to know if the man above is:

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- B) A senior writer for *The NAMBLA Bulletin*
- C) Make up your own cruel/clever answer in less than 25 words. (A defaced photo earns points!)

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The first 10 in will get the video. The rest will be LOSERS!
(You must be 18 to enter and send statement of age!!)



"The good news about Alexandre's feature film is that it does keep you guessing. Satisfyingly enough, the mind games are played on an ever widening field of possibilities. The film effectively showcases the talents of Alexandre."

John Lewis

The Met Dallas Arts & Entertainment Weekly

"The film looks and feels like no other independent feature I've seen. I find it fascinating that *Psychotropic Overload*'s free-form media-mixing and hallucinatory editing style was obviously conceived and executed before *NATURAL BORN KILLERS*, and on its own low budget terms, it's equally disorienting and intriguing."

Matt Zoller Seitz
Dallas Observer

"The cinematography in this psycho-thriller-with-a-fruity-twist was interesting and added just the right amount of deranged highlights. Alexandre does have a wacky twist and imagery that puts a slight spin on his effort."

Paul Ziss
Film Threat Video Guide

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reviewed, this program is quite simply in eighteen different places at once and I can't make heads or tails of just what the devil Mr. Mumford is trying to say.

—Scott Russo

BLACK OPERATIONS

6mins/Computer-generated video
Knock Out Productions



This is essentially a music video produced to drum up cash for a Knock Out Productions CD-ROM game. The premise of the game sounds pretty interesting: digging through layer after layer of popular conspiracy theories (from JFK to UFO's) only to find more mysteries waiting.

The video, however, is really just a lo-tech version of the stuff that computer geeks—most notably multi-media band Emergency Broadcast Network—have been cranking

out for quite a while. Samples of both audio and video bites are slapped together in a swirling, electronic stew that force us to question the authenticity of what passes for truth across that map of pixels resting in every family's living room... Yawn

The UFO "storyline" of the video is just as stale, making me yearn for the innocent, pre-Geraldo days of Sun Classic Pictures. Here's hoping that: A) they get their money for the CD-ROM and B) it's a lot better than this.

—Jay Hollinsworth

CIRCUIT

20mins/16mm/Video
Home Movies Company



A series of very short, bizarre and often humorous vignettes that flow like an odd stream of consciousness into each other, *Circuit* immediately sucked me into its

ON LOCATION WITH PRIMUS: SHOOTING WYNONA'S BIG BROWN BEAVER

PRIMUS' LEAD SINGER, Les Claypool, likes quirky things. He calls Chaney, his girlfriend "Squirrel." No-one seems sure what came first though—the "Squirrel Crossing" sign-post that decorates the pathway outside his front door or the affectionate nick-name. Hmmmm.

Roughly 60 miles outside of San Francisco lies the subdued town of Santa Rosa. A further 30 miles beyond there lies the really sedate town of Sebastopol, home to, amongst other small business, a house that doubles as possibly the world's only drive-thru espresso shop. This tranquil and picturesque town is also the home of weird and wild Les Claypool. Re-named Ranch Relaxo to accommodate Les' lifestyle, it resembles a bucolic Playboy Mansion. "I've been living here for 8 months now and it's becoming a huge part of me. We pretty much have done everything here. We recorded the album in that room right there," he points out. "Did all the artwork in the computer room right there. We did most of the animation and now we're doing the video. It's almost like Lucas Ranch," he laughs.

To get from the gate entrance of Relaxo to Les' house, you first walk up a winding 150 yards (rough going in the Summer sun). Aside from the large lake, swimming pool & jacuzzi, mansion-sized hacienda, and a pair of guest houses that per-

form as a pool room and recording/computer studio, Ranch Relaxo is, at least for a day, acting as video shoot locale.

It is here that two documentary teams, several journalists, girlfriends of the band and, of course, a crew of 20 are shooting the live-action sequences for Primus' new single "Wynona's Big Brown Beaver." Taken from their latest release, *Tales From The Punch Bowl*, the track bears an uncanny resemblance to Charlie Daniel's "The Devil Went Down To Georgia" but it has that funkified Primus trademark stamped all over it.

As is with everything Primus are involved with, the "live-action" part of their video comes with an unusual twist.

"Make some funny faces," directs Les Claypool to his band-mate Tim "Herb" Alexander. Sure thing, Les. The entire band is garbed up in the rather normal look of prosthetic cowboy caricatures courtesy of XFX, the same company that invented the ever-popular Duracell family commercials currently airing on your TV. And for the occasion the band has altered its name to



The boys of Primus are ready to ride.

However, when Wild Bill Claypool takes aim, he hits it first time allowing him to blow celebration smoke from his pistol. Everyone on the set laughs at Herb's ill-fortune.

Although the band insists they haven't been chasing controversy with the current single, it seems to have found them regardless. Recently D.J.'s on L.A. radio have reported that Soul Asylum's Dave Pirner is quite displeased at Primus. Apparently he thinks "Wynona's Big Brown Beaver" may be a reference to his girlfriend Winona Ryder. "He is?" Les says shocked. "I never really expected people to assume it was Winona Ryder. Well...maybe to a certain extent. But I'm really surprised to see how many people are referring to Winona Ryder, I actually thought it would be Wynona Judd. But the song is perfectly innocent and when the video comes out people will see that Wynona has a beaver which is a real beaver and she's a blond haired girl. I like Winona Ryder's work. I think she's a tremendous actress and I would hope she has a good sense of humor. I'm not attacking her. It has nothing to do with her. It's really just a luxurious pun on vaginas."

In what seems to be a growing trend amongst musicians, Les Claypool says this may not be his last foray into filmmaking. A long time fan of the Cohen brothers and Sam Raimi ("We've ripped so much of our video stuff from him."), he maintains that if he hadn't become a musician he would have become a filmmaker. In fact he says he's been kicking around several movie ideas with his longtime video collaborator, Mark Kohr

—Dominic Griffin



Slate the take before they melt!



Claypool jams clad in plastic.



ONE OF THE CRAZIES FROM CIRCUIT

strange world where I remained a welcome captive for an all-to-brief 20 minutes. A particularly enjoyable scene featured a gaggle of animal rights protesters getting the crap beaten out of them by several rogue cops. Created on an obviously limited budget, writer/director Jay Hollinsworth, manages to deliver an entertaining little film which I heartily recommend, especially for those of you with nothing better to do than get drunk or high and watch odd things on the tele.

—SR

DEAD LOOTERS

23mins/Super8 & 16mm
A Jon Springer Film

2

Apparently *Dead Looters* is a way low budget "homage" to George Romero. (I'm sure he's deeply flattered.) Shot in black-and-white with crappy zombies (the kind that walk with their arms out), there is no dialogue. This can actually be a blessing at times if there is a particularly good soundtrack (does Petula Clark do it for you?) or if the cinematography is out of this world (it is not) or if there is gratuitous sex or nudity (nope, not here). The highlight of this droll flick—which only came close to moving when our fingers came even closer to the FFWD button on the remote—seemed to be a second or two when misleading editing gave

the impression you were going to catch a glimpse of the lead actresses tits as she changed from her Hershey's syrup "blood" splattered sweater before going out to combat the "frightening" zombies. According to the accompanying fact sheet the actress refused to speak with its creators after its completion. Wise move, girlie.

I'm getting really sleepy just thinking about this (thankfully) short cinematic disaster. I'm tempted to zombie-walk my ass (arms outstretched) to Minneapolis and put these filmmakers out of their short, miserable careers. Ah, but amidst this seething diatribe I suppose, in a moment of kindness, due to the fact they made a blatant ass-kissing comment in that fact sheet, I'll throw 'em a press quote: "A Must See." (For crap fetishists!)

—Erin & Sioux Z

PENITENTIARY ROMANCE

40mins/16mm
Untitled Film

6

If you've ever seen *Baraka*, you know it's an ennobling 90-minute montage of nature and religious scenes from throughout the world. Who cares? *Penitentiary Romance* takes *Baraka*'s form and turns it upside down. It's a 40-minute montage of a truly disturbed mind that could make anybody a craven misfit.

Narrated by a creaky organ and synthesizer group called Mainstream, this *Baraka* of the insane slides through a potpourri of scarred sludge, clips of rotten science fiction movies, vertigo-induced visions of friends, and queasy chunks of infomercial TV, all seen through the hazy glare of director Steve Dakes rust-tinted film.

This roll of nightmare images eventually left me a little cold, but the imagination that went into this film can't

be ignored.

—Andrew Asch

ADDICTED TO MURDER

90mins/Video
Brimstone Productions

7

Serial killer movies are tired. Vampire movies had a stake driven through their hearts a long ago. Mix them together and you might breathe a little life into the genres which is exactly what director Kevin Lindemuth does in *Addicted To Murder*.

The film starts in a documentary mode with a bunch of dreary "experts" talking to toned-down tabloid reporters on what made poor Joel Winter (Mick McCleery) a serial killer. Unfortunately for these dork authorities, the reason wasn't a sexually abusive mom or cruel bullies. The catalyst that made Joel into a killer was a coven of vampires lead by the gorgeous Rachel (Laura McLaughlin).

Joel spends the rest of this piece trying to avoid his bloodsucking fate by being a



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CHECK OR MONEY ORDER

sensitive '90s guy. But this old genre joke is on him. The gang chose him and he can't get out. The film's deft cinematography adds a lot of life to this piece which often lags. It's Achilles heel is, you guessed it, the choice of genre. Vampires and serial killers can't be resurrected. Bring on the new bogeymen.

—AA

CRYSTAL REALITY

40mins/"Digital Motion Vision"
Falcon High Productions

2

Everyone always wonders how some of Hollywood's biggest box-office bombs ever make it to the screen to begin with. Well, thanks in part to director Rick Styczynski's brutally awful film *Crystal Reality*, we see where some of these stupid ideas are born.

Shot entirely in something called Digital Motion Vision (picture your camcorder shoot-

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ing at a very high stop-motion speed and you'll get the nauseating idea), this waste of tape tracks the emotionally shattered life of a too-often-abused woman named Crystal. Used as a sex object one too many times, Crystal gives friends lengthy descriptions of what she wishes she could do to the scumbags whom she finds herself dating.

If that premise doesn't sound worthy of a 2 rating, there are plenty of other reasons. While relaying her "fantasy" in a long flashback/dream, the action moves primarily to a restaurant/bar. The sound is so bad in these scenes, that one can only make out every third or fourth word. Couple this with the lousy transitions and dreadfully lame acting, and it makes for one painful 40 minutes.

Crystal Reality meets virtually every criteria for a bad film: poor acting, a bad script, terrible sound, inconsistent

lighting and a soundtrack containing lifted music from Salt 'n' Peppa. Slightly amusing (only because it is such a trite rip-off) is the bathroom visit by the ghost of Andrew "Dice" Clay. With Quentin Tarantino references throughout the film, this feeble attempt at emulating Val Kilmer's *Elvis*, ala *True Romance*, is completely wasted and only show how lacking Styczynski is in the originality department.

That's really OK though, because we get an ample dose of Lorainna Bobbit cutlery use that is neither shocking, nor enthralling. The entire piece is like one long joke that has no punchline. Ramona Buchicchio is not horrendous in the lead of Crystal, but the script is so lacking that she

has nowhere to bring the character. As for her support however, there isn't an actor in the lot.

This piece of crap is worthy of a 1, but that type of rating might actually induce somebody into giving it a shot as a goof (like people who buy Rhino Records' "Golden Throats" anthologies because the idea of hearing Sammy Davis Jr. crooning "In The Ghetto" is pretty cool). There is nothing enjoyable about this film except that one minute moment when you realize that it is about to end.

—Jim Bartoo

DON'T WATCH THIS SHOW (Episode 1)

26mins/Video

One By One Film And Video



Director Mike McCleery has brought to mind a wealth of past comedy and an inspirational view of that genre's future with his very amusing collection of sketches in this first episode of *Don't Watch This Show*.

Structured in a similar vein as the old *Monty Python* shows, it brings together a number of quick, funny pieces that flow from, and to, one another with an uncharacteristic zest. The troop works well with one another and never really become stale (though obviously, the same people are in each of the segments).

The show opens with a two-shot punch involving a doofus pulling his car over to take a leak. The fact that he is enjoying his little sophomoric escapade so much is only the beginning of the joke... any other details would give away a pretty good punchline.

With comedic bows to *Python*, Woody Allen's *Everything You Wanted To Know About Sex...But Were Afraid To Ask* and some of the finer points of *Saturday Night Live* and *Second City Television*, *Don't Watch*... shows why it can be so much more interesting to simply cut to the chase.

With no bit lasting more than a few minutes, there is no time for something to go too far away (even McCleery's inclusion of a sub-par AIDS bit from his original *Don't Watch This Movie* doesn't last long enough to really dislike).

Among the most memorable pieces in the package are a bit where the actors in a crime movie stop acting to watch the sexcapade going on in the home of their TV viewers and a pair of sleazy commercials for Holy Water brand spring water ("Sometimes redemption comes from within...").

Though with most TV shows, it is hard to say with any certainty that one installment is enough to insure future success, if *Don't Watch This Show* can stay on the path they've started, it will be

something to keep one's eyes open for.

—JB

VENICE BEACH CONFIDENTIAL

45mins/Video

A Jeff Jackson Film



Jeff Jackson takes you on an intimate journey through a day in the life of Venice, California with the video epic *Venice Beach Confidential*. Not following much of a plan, or at least that's how it all seemed, we get most of the imagery via verite' footage and some sidewalk interviews.

Ah yes, those nutty sidewalk folk of Venice. We get the Venice Beach P.D., circa 1986, talking about the weirdos, we get the weirdos talking about the Venice Beach P.D., we get the turban-wearing guitarist on wheels, we get a drunk eating cottage cheese, we get southern fried freaks on a crucifix, we get it *all* baby. I wouldn't be surprised if the City of Venice Beach tried suing Jackson for defamation—you see, he forgot to update the video by adding scenes of gang violence and drug dealing. Nevertheless, you do get treated to a wide variety of sidewalk musicians ranging from Sam Cooke sound-alikes to one-armed country singers.

Now what did I get from this montage piece; rather, is it important that I took anything from this video experience? I do believe that J.J. did intend for the viewer to get something from his work. I mean he did produce a video for some reason. Well Jeff, I did get some of the flavor of the Venice atmosphere from your video. Here's a suggestion for your next documentary: *Compton Confidential*.

Paul Zies

YIKES! CATHARINE WHEEL SHOT IN DEATH VALLEY!

NOT CONTENT WITH JUST BEING A SYMBOL for the unkempt and unshaven set, Stephen Dorff, the actor who helped bring *SFW* to the big screen, has decided to move behind the lens and direct a video for Catherine Wheel, the Yarmouth, England-based rock band.

Currently, you're probably familiar with the searing and guitar-riffing "Way Down," the first single—from their latest release *Happy Days*—which alternative radio across the nation has lovingly embraced. But the track Dorff and the band decided to collaborate on is the more sensorial and beautifully arranged 8 minute epic, "Eat My Dust You Insensitive Fuck," a song that the band's lead singer, Rob Dickinson, describes as, "written for me and for anyone who's sort of been in the bath and felt totally frustrated and desperate, feeling that no one appreciates them to the fullest." Although the sentiments expressed in the track resemble a rather candid kick in the bollox, the song is a beautiful juxtaposition of swirling Hammond organ sounds and bluesy harmonic layered upon a brooding and building picking-guitar. Adding to the gorgeous deception of the track is Dickinson's passionate and soft delivery of the song's title.

With the length of the song and more importantly the rather provocative title, the band are pretty much guaranteed NO radio or TV airplay. Plus they are vehemently refusing to alter the song for either medium. And it's a decision their Mercury label backs them on. Howard Paar, head publicity honcho at the Polygram subsidiary says, "We'd never ask them to alter it."

So why do it? "The more I think about it," begins Dickinson, "The more I think it's gonna be one of the more important songs on the album. The message is a rather brutal statement but that sentiment kinda represents the entire album."

Shot on a shoestring video budget of \$15,000 utilizing 3 Super 8 cameras, the "Eat My Dust You Insensitive Fuck" clip features a cornucopia of P I P. and full-screen images that tell an abstract narrative that Dickinson says is about, "a waif-like girl [played by Summer Phoenix, sister of] drifting through fucked-up Hollywood out into Death Valley. And me doing some funky things." Those "funky things" that the 29 year-old singer/songwriter refers to involves him dressing up in king's clothing carrying a helium balloon walking through a wilderness. Music video fans maybe familiar with this particular image. British techno-rock band Depeche Mode used the same metaphors for their hit "Enjoy The Silence."

"It was a genuine coincidence," responds Dickinson, "The reason I used the costume was I wanted an image of me being superior to everyone. No one can touch a king's costume."

The genesis for the actor-singer collaboration began earlier this year when the band were mixing their album at L.A.'s Ocean Way studios. In the studio next to them was R.E.M.'s Michael Stipe, who was doing a little collaborating of his own

with Tori Amos. And Dorff was hanging out with his pal Stipe. "Stephen was hanging out in between movies,"

remembers Dickinson, "And the more he heard the song, the more he became fascinated and fixated with it. He had just finished this movie *S.F.W.* which has the same kind of sentiment." Convinced that the young thespian had it in him to helm the video, they offered the gig to him. "He was brimming with ideas," says Dickinson, "the way he visualized the song, the images just poured out of him. He's very sensitive to the music."

To convince Summer Phoenix to get involved the band played the track over the phone and she immediately agreed.

With only a minute budget to play with and no money for permits, the cast and crew had to engage in a little guerilla filmmaking that wasn't without its hitches, as Dickinson fondly recalls. "There's this one place in Death Valley where it costs \$5,000 an hour to shoot, so to avoid paying we had to get up at 3 am in the morning. And that was after we'd gotten hideously stoned the night before. Anyway, as we're wrapping up shooting, this patrol man comes over looking for permits. We just played dumb and said we didn't realize and left. But not everyone was so lucky as Dickinson tells. "This big entourage shows up when we're leaving to shoot a heavy metal video and they'd paid \$15,000 just for permits!"

This may not be the last venture into music for Dorff. According to Dickinson, both him and Dorff have been working on songs together which they hope to record some day. And if that's enough, the actor has also been busy songwriting with Michael Stipe. For Dickinson, he says the future may see him doing a little screenwriting or perhaps "adapting a gothic horror novel by Ian Banks."

—Dominic Griffin



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So you wanna have Stephen Dorff's "Eat My Dust You Insensitive Fuck" video in your own grubby hands to impress all your friends? Okay then. Film **THEAT VIDEO GUIDE** and Mercury Records will give it to you if you can tell us, in less than 25 words, why Dorff doesn't shave daily. Send to: FTVG/CW Contest, Po Box 3170, Los Angeles, CA 9078. Legal Stuff: You must be over 18, blah, blah, blah.

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A LOT OF FUN FOR THE EVIL ONE

20mins/Video

A Mana Beatty/M.M. Serra Film

5 1

Remember what I said about the video with the industrial music, the burning shoes, the shaving German guy and the one step down from porn? Ladies and gentlemen, I give you *A Lot of Fun for the Evil One*. Definitely not an art flick, but then who defines the art anyway? Beatty and Serra seem to be working out some of their aggressions with a video camera.

There are some definite images of control in here. You get the forced haircuts and shaves, some spanking here and there, a couple of circus tricks involving candle wax and torches, a bound penis being threatened with scissors and who can forget the butch girl with the strap on giving it

to them (male and female). *Evil One* is basically an attempt to show the down-and-dirty, dare I say nitty gritty, side of dominance and submission. I'm sure some people enjoy watching others getting strapped to a spinning wheel or hung upside down from the ceiling (some people like rap music), but it really didn't show a lot of effort in its presentation. There was plenty of shock value—don't get me wrong there—but it just seemed to be more of a quickly-shot video rather than a put together film.

P7

BURGLAR FROM HELL

120mins/Video

A "Chip" Herman Film

5 1

(20)

Everyone knows that Brooklyn can be a rough place. For *Burglar From Hell's* director Chip Herman, things are



NAKED AND SMOKING IN
BURGLAR FROM HELL

rough all over. Chip takes us on a journey into Hell (the Hell of hairy backs, nasty accents, terrible acting and big hair) by way of a rain dance gone wrong.

A group of young adults get together for a weekend away from it all and rent a house. However, little do they know that the previous owner killed a burglar and buried him in the back yard a year ago.

Anyway, through jumpy video edits and terrible lighting, we get to see the gang assemble at the house, meet the nutty caretaker, perform a voodoo ceremony, dodge white gang members, and battle—recently back from the dead Frank The Tank. There are plenty of cheap laughs, well intentioned social messages, cheesy bloody gore scenes and one interesting set of boobs.

Ah yes, the all important *Friday the 13th*-generated tool that must accompany any movie where people under the age of twenty-five die at the hand of resurrected freaky naked ladies! Kudos go out to Chip for scouring the streets of Brooklyn and finding actress Debbie D to play the part of "naked girl in the shower." It seems no nudity had occurred by the time Chip finished shooting so he must have quickly written a five minute scene that had absolutely nothing to do with the rest of the story and spliced it in there.

But don't turn that nose up so quickly, Chip shows promise. Some of those shots were very innovative, yes sir-ee. Even though the story was about as tired, old and used as grandma's you-know-what, he had a story and stuck to it. Let's not forget the nudity either, it went with the genre. I believe if we see any more of Chip's work in the future, provided he's been working on his screenplays and cinematography, we'll be pleasantly surprised with a much better product. Say Chip, lose everyone else except Debbie D.

P7

CLUB X-RATED VII

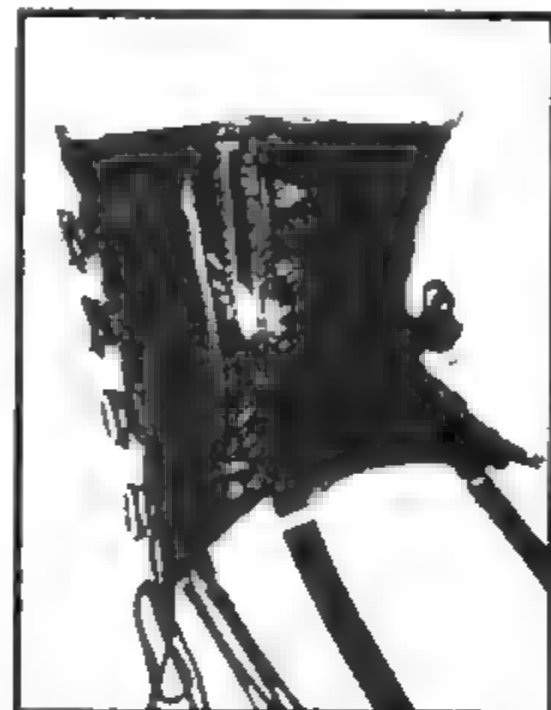
91mins/Video

Noir/Leather

6 1

I guess since I wrote the piece on Steen Schapiro's *EuroFetish* documentaries in the last issue, Dom has me pegged as an authority on the subject. Which is fine by me because ANY chance I get to watch beautiful women cavorting around in leather and latex, by God I'll take it!

Unfortunately, that prurient interest in itself wasn't enough to save this tape for me. The



CLUB X RATED

latest installment in Noir Leather's series of live fetish show videos, *Club X-Rated VII* is billed as a documentary of their 1994 New Year's Eve live fetish show/party. And that's exactly what it does is document the event. Subject matter aside, however, simply recording an event on tape doesn't make for an interesting or engaging video.

The first 40 minutes or so, primarily consists of interviews with the performers as they prep backstage with a few preliminary stage acts thrown in for variety. All of this gets kinda old in a hurry so that by the time the actual show itself started, I was already pretty bored.

Once the show did finally get cranked up, things did improve, but only slightly. The S M fantasies acted out on stage were clearly just acts. The whole show played like S M as ballet or performance art, so that rather than being charged with sexual energy or

even being mildly erotic, I felt like I was looking at a leather and latex fashion and apparatus show. The individual acts simply droned on, each blurring indistinctly into the next, with only the appearance of an MC to separate them.

Unimaginative camera work from what appeared to be a single handheld camera gave the whole affair an extremely amateurish feel while the awful sound from the live video did nothing to help as the industrial soundtrack simply turned to discordant noise.

True, the women were amazing, the sets and choreography were impressive and the costuming was provocative. I'm sure it made for a wild evening had you been there in person. Unfortunately that don't help us sitting at home.

Merle Bertrand

JACKER

116mins/Video

A Ben Stanski film

5 ①

Boy I tell you, you can get too much of a bad thing. Stanski (a member of the Chip Herman Arthouse) bears the crap out of a dead horse in *Jacker*. It could have been done in thirty minutes tops, Ben. The story involved a nut who kills his woman, some random folks in traffic, a police detective's sister and the female neighbor (Debbie D!), with shower trouble. The acting ranged from poor to mediocre, the camera work was bearable and the story was boring. It was your basic guy going nuts killing people being pursued by a cop, nothing special, no twist, no new angle on an old story, no innovative cinematography, just a flat cola.

Then there are the not-so-positive points to *Jacker*. This is clearly a first time effort, so things can only get better for Stanski now that he has this video epic under his belt. His next project will probably have better editing. He has a

good grasp of lighting, and he successfully stuck with his story. I can't emphasize the importance of a story, in a motion picture. If you are making art and using film as the medium then a story really isn't that important; however, for budding film makers such as Stanski, a central unifying theme with a definitive beginning, middle and end is vital. He followed through on his story. A crucial device if you intend to use film to tell a story.

I must say, I do commend Stanski on his choice of "naked girl in the shower" actress Debbie D. Even though she's no Elle Macpherson, coming in at a height of no more than five-foot-three with a long permed mane and muscles that could fend off your average date-rapist. However, she does have a certain Brooklyn-esque quality that is quite captivating. I would definitely like to see her again in the many cult classics that will come out of the Rockaway Park area of New York in the near future.

PZ

THE SACRED FIRE

13mins/16mm

A Peter Billingsley/Robert Meyer Film

7 ⑥ ⑩

Pretend you'd never heard of Peter Billingsley and you'd say that this film looks like a student film. Now, if you're like most people out there who know who Peter "Messy Marvin" Billingsley (*Real People*, *A Christmas Story*) is, you'd probably say that *The Sacred Fire* still looks like a student film. Which is exactly what this is, a very well put together student or first film effort.

Pete and Bert use a convicts' flashback to tell the story of a man who believes that the homeless are an alien race that have come to our planet in order to suck out our eternal spark. Billingsley's character poses as a homeless man and hunts down the aliens determined to find them. One of

Pete's high school mates, the very attractive Angela Moffy, bumps into him one day and gets drawn into the whole mess when she decides to buy him lunch. Pete gets eaten by one of "them" at the end.

Not the newest of the new in ideas; nevertheless, the end product was a well done effort. In fact, Peter Billingsley won The Golden Scroll Award for *The Sacred Fire*. I can't honestly say that I know what that award is, but I'm sure it goes to good films.

-PZ

NOTE: (Sacred Fire appears on The Midnight Follies Collection)

THE INVINCIBLE KUNG FU GUY

82mins/Video

Will Martin Productions

9 ①

As in the case of such movies as *Amazon Women On The Moon* and *The Kentucky*

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INVINCIBLE KUNG FU GUY

Fried Movie, this is definitely late night humor. To wit: alcohol necessary.

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stories you'll ever get in a martial arts movie

The plot is totally irrelevant. Just take your stereotypical 70's Bruce Lee or Jackie Chan plot about fighting bandits and avenging the death of your parents. In the space of about 22 minutes, the movie covers most of the usual clichés and stereotypes. It's even shot on a high grain film which resembles those 70's movies

This movie however might not be for everyone. But if you grew up watching *Kung Fu Theatre* and the like, you'll definitely appreciate this masterpiece

Chris Chanand

DARK FAITH

19mins, 16mm

An Eric Wallace Film

7 \$3

You know that feeling you get when you watch a film and there are a couple of actors in it who aren't really that spectacular and the story involves ghosts or some supernatural power? I like to compare it to the sensation that sweeps over my body when the local news team tackles the old "what's up in the O.J. case today" question. I know, I'm being too rough, aside from the meat of the story and the after-school special all-stars, the mechanics of the film were fantastic. Wallace was using all of the standard goodies, the dramatic lighting, the use of color to heighten emotion in scenes, dissolves and fades of all increments, nutty noises and nifty angles. Unfortunately, they were all used to aid in telling the story of two mismatched lovers plagued by some unknown force which never showed itself and never brought authenticity or immediacy to the film. The editing made the pace of *Dark Faith*, something better than mediocre. The technical support team should be congratulated for making and saving this film. I understand that I

have made an emphasis of a good story being necessary for a good film, nevertheless, great technical work goes right along side that and should be as equally emphasized and sought after

PZ

PUBLIC IMAGE

27mins, 16mm

A Laszlo Bene Film

8 \$3

Bene delivers an interesting, yet clouded, interpretation of the old saying "it's what's on the inside that really matters with *Public Image*. An intriguing selection of time and place, Bene takes us beyond the year two thousand to a society where genetic engineering has created a race of pretty people. Society begins to lose its appreciation for being beautiful thence a program is begun to enlist volunteers to become ugly and serve as reminders of that for which society should be grateful. One of the volunteers realizes that his decision in joining the program has not accomplished what he had wanted it to, so he gets the whole thing reversed. He's back to normal, he's good looking, girls are giving him the eye, life is condoms and beer until everything kind of falls apart and makes it look like his decision to reverse the "uglifying" process was a bad move. Now, I am not Laszlo Bene, however, I think the message he was trying to get across became clouded if not nuts.

The cinematography was well executed, the make-up effects were outstanding, the acting was very nice and the story a little confused. What does that all mean? Still a great friggin movie

PZ

CRYSTAL BALL

28mins, 16mm

A Bud Robertson Film

7 \$3

Now people, when I say that a movie wasn't spectacular it may just mean that nothing new or overly nifty caught my eye. *Crystal Ball* was not a spectacular film. It was a well put together project, it just wasn't spectacular. Spectacular means hairs stood up or people stood up. This was just a well directed and produced film.

Bud shows us a Grandpa and grandson duo who run a deli and teeter on the edge of just barely making it to the next day. Grandpa gets a new computer, which comes with a game "Crystal Ball," and begins fiddling with the unpredictable forces and consequences of delving into one's own future. Well, Grandpa gets greedy and wins a whole heck of a lot of money in Vegas then tries to show off by showing his grandson his own file in the future. A power surge eats the grandson's file; consequently, eating the grandson. There's more.

Gramps saves his grandson by fighting with a power chord and brings him back from the depths of a binary Hell.

Bud, I don't have a beef with you, I thought that the whole thing went along swimmingly well. The special effects might have been a little cheesy but we're talking about a fixed budget, so I don't have a problem with it. I'm only here to try and encourage you on to greatness. Go for a little bit of dazzle, a slight sizzle, or maybe just a little bit of snap, crackle and pop on the next one. You may want to look into contacting a Brooklyn-based actress, Debbie D.

—PZ

PROFESSION: NEO-NAZI

87 mins/16mm

Drift Releasing

8 

Most neo-Nazis are mindless alcoholics who have the



NEO-NAZI

bad taste in thinking they have something important to say. So it's a real surprise to find one that seems bright and speaks coherently. In fact it's rather scary.

Director Winfried Bonengel follows this horror that takes shape in Ewald Althans, a 28-year-old neo-Nazi organizer who travels around Canada and Europe to resurrect the flabby Nazi ghost.

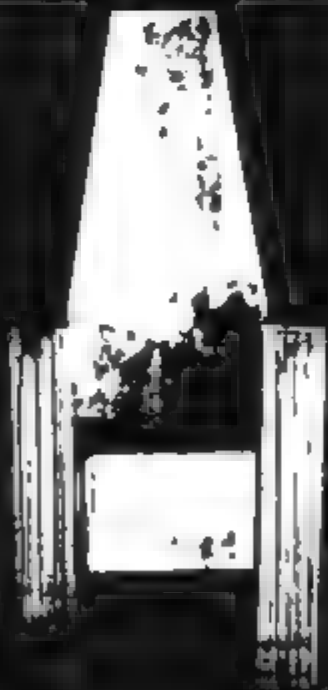
For whatever reasons, he

does public relations for a goofy, old fascist in Canada named Ernst Zendel. Zendel made a name for himself pulling stunts such as parading around in concentration camp uniforms while in jail in Toronto. Since the brain-dead Zendel, who paints in his spare time like another famous old Nazi, is banned from Germany, Althans spreads his word all over the "Fatherland" and Europe. Watching him go about his work is chilling.

Althans makes an impassioned speech to youths wearing a James Dean uniform of jeans jacket and undershirt. He also knows how to conduct himself around so-called adults. He doesn't embarrass himself by getting into stupid fistfights like Zendel. He's a natural politician. It's guys like him that make fascism respectable. And really scary.

Despite some poor direction this documentary is powerful. Stellar scenes include Althans' parents talking about how

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FILM THREAT VIDEO GUIDE

I N D E X

In an effort to improve communication between filmmakers and to allow readers to purchase some incredible films at incredible prices, we are now pleased to announce the new **FILM THREAT VIDEO GUIDE FILM INDEX™**. For more information about each title, see this issue's review section or peruse the appropriate feature stories.

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Royal Oak, MI 48067

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Foolish Mortal Films
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Brooklyn, NY 11215

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ton, MA 01060

DEINSTAG

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DEAD LOOTERS

Jon Springer
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N. Scandia, MA 55073

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4280 Hotel De Ville
Montreal Quebec H2W 2H4
CANADA

HOLES ON THE NECK

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NYC, NY 10011

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Lunatic Fringe Productions
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their son grew up. "He always demanded attention... negatively," says his mom. Another scene is where he takes the camera crew to Auschwitz and tries to convince tourists in the gas chambers that the Holocaust was a sham. The dull, outraged visitors are no match for his cool, debating style, even if it is bullshit. Even scarier are some of his friends, neo-Nazi mercenaries fighting against the Serbs in Bosnia. Scarier than that is an interview with an old lady who stuffs envelopes for Althans. She says that Hitler was like Jesus. He only wanted peace. Perhaps even more subtly frightening was when Althans was playing tour leader at Auschwitz. Could anyone trust him when he says, "Let's go to the gas chamber."

-AA

THE ELEGANT SPANKING

30mins, 16mm/B&W
A Beatty Delain Film

8

When I think of a fetish film I envision a Beta video with a couple of German fellows in drag shaving each other down while hundreds of women's shoes burn in the corner, all scored to industrial music. Maria Beatty and Rosemary Delain have forever changed the fetish film experience for me with *The Elegant Spanking*. Elegant being the key word here, Beatty and Delain used their imagery to lower me gently in a warm Calgon bath and sent me into a dreamland where it's gratifying to get spanked, poked, pushed, ordered around, and even urinated on.

I was a little skeptical at first finding it hard to believe that a dominant and submissive session could be considered to be more a form of art than a step down from porn. I must tell you though, once the little French maid started rolling around in the nice tea-room while her Mistress

spanked her bottom, scored to relaxing piano music, I began to see that this film was capturing the act and making it into an art form. The pace of the movements was very relaxed and soothing, giving the whole experience an almost ethereal quality.

Even though there was an atmosphere of negative action—the peeing, spanking, and poking—the response I felt was very positive because of the lack of anxiety and aggression that stood out through the body of the film.

The photography was superb, the black-and-white format complemented the tone of domination and submission and transformed the Mistress and French maid into nudes, not naked chicks.

Believe me, it has got to be difficult to turn one hundred and ten spans (brief use of long stemmed roses), breast manipulation, nipple pulling, clitoral stimulation (using a string of pearls), belt lashings, toe sucking, face slaps, heel sucking and golden showers (including some oral use of that golden stuff) into a genuine art film, nevertheless, *Spanking* pulled it off.

—PZ

SEXBEAT

11mins, 16mm
A G Roadruck Flick

2

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. I forget what famous slob gets the copyright to this chestnut, but my grandmother used to say it anytime she sniffed out an idea or concept that was half-baked or sophomoric. Nothing sums up *Sexbeat* better.

In an arch and obvious attempt to juxtapose the numbing, dehumanizing affect of critical thought-arresting consumer advertising via the media with man's ongoing retreat from genuine human contact and its equally numbing affects, *Sexbeat* grasps at and reveals the obvious with a

remarkable lack of craft.

The 11-minute film follows the daily drudgery of an urban-dwelling miscreant who suffers from particularly pedestrian, yet unrelenting sexual fantasies that cause him to withdraw from his co-workers and become obsessed with acquiring the cut-to-the-chase variety, genital sex. It's really small wonder why the man is disturbed when, in the obligatory and blandly Marxian "this is the awful place where he works scene," we see that his occupation is to sit at a long desk and watch televisions that play only sexually underscored advertising, while his equally dull cronies query him about petty amounts of money he owes them in horribly out-of-sync, Godzilla flick-like dubbed English. I thought this especially odd since the film is American, but then again, looping takes practice.

The film's director s-p-e-l-l-s out his message by quick-cutting well known advertising slogans, jingles and footage with split-second hardcore snatches (yes, pun intended).

While it was interesting to see that even the most innocuous product spot is rife with psycho-sexual references, one could easily imagine some hayseed college's film prof spouting about how the film resonated with the touchstones of Fromm, Reich and (sniff) Orwell in its nightmarish and boldly real portrayal of man's inhumanity to man in the name of corporate avarice, while the cool kids in the back of the room threw up copiously into their black bookbags

bearing Depeche Mode stickers

Anyway, the film's existential anti-hero eventually opts for an inflatable sex toy, which after partially inflating, he beats to a rubberized plastic pulp. I would imagine this violent outcome has something to do with the old adage that society made him what he is, but as a far better character from a far better film (*Repo Man*) once argued when another loser lay dying on the floor of a convenience store while pleading the same defense, "Bullshit. You're just another white suburban punk." Exactly.

—Joe Flescher

READING TOM SAWYER

19mins, 16mm
NBFCO

7

An interrogation is the subject of *Reading Tom Sawyer*

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Tom (not the fictional Twain) is being questioned about his possible involvement in a murder. The two detectives questioning Tom give him the third degree.

After asking Tom to describe a hypothetical murder in very specific detail, they read him his rights. However, Tom doesn't have a lawyer present during his questioning. As hours pass, he's forced to go over his story time and time again. The patronizing detectives act as if they are his friends and they just want him to get something off his chest. Well, finally after nearly twenty four hours of constant machine gun attack of questions, Tom admits his guilt.

A very well made flick that features some excellent lighting and camerawork Ken Furlong's script is well written and the dialogue is enhanced by excellent delivery and performances. The constant banter is reminiscent of some of David Mamet's work.

While this film is well made, it doesn't differ too drastically from the excellent interrogation scene in *In the Name of the Father* aside from the fact that Tom is guilty. However, it's an excellent effort by director Furlong and his star Barry Cameron

—Maximilian Graves

THE TRUE HISTORY OF CRIME

10mins/16mm

Bad Dog Ltd



The True History of Crime is a puppet short about the jail sentence and subsequent release of Henry Lee Lucas. An amazing concept, it's a short post-modern masterpiece.

Oozing superb production values, it utilizes brilliant cinematography to create a surreal jail setting in which we see Henry haunted by the ghost of his first victim—his mother. In what can only appear to be a bizarre format we learn facts about one of the least understood serial killers of the modern era

The weakness of the correctional system is to blame for letting Henry Lee Lucas free, to go about the process of brutally murdering 55 people. We see Henry plead with the warden to allow him to remain behind bars to prevent him from killing again. Upon the very day of his release Henry is at it again killing an innocent motorist.

Helping to enhance its bizarre nature is its grainy black-and-white film stock. An excellent score helps to make a most unusual setting realistic. Do yourself a favor and don't let this one pass you by.

—MG

THE RETURN OF THE SON OF NOTHING

25 mins/16mm

A Dustin Ingle Flick



What happens when man-made technology fails? That is the question that philosophers, writers, and filmmakers have attempted to address since the dawn of the industrial revolution. *The Return of the Son of Nothing* deals with the isolation of the individual and the failure of technology.

It centers around a soldier who pilots the most revolutionary tank in the world through a combat zone in eastern Europe. The tank ultra-

mately becomes obsolete and the soldier is left to fend for himself. Alone and desperate, the isolated and lone soldier tries to maintain his sanity in the wilderness. The resolution occurs when he finally meets up with another soldier who can serve as a link to what he is led to perceive is the world.

Boasting terrific camera work, it uses just enough distortion to obscure the obvious. The problem that I have with this film is the narration. The copy that I saw might have had a bad audio track making it almost impossible to decipher what the narrator was saying. Regardless though, the *Return of the Son of Nothing* makes you think, which is a novelty in the short film genre.

—MG

KILLER IN THE HOUSE

83mins/Video



About an angst filled youth, who after leaving his home, lives a miserable life in New York City, *Killer In The House* has few redeeming qualities

He returns home to New Jersey for a break only to become depressed about his families state of affairs. His mother is caring but he has an unmarried sister who is perpetually pregnant and is raising her children with no male role model. It's suppose to be a depressing set-up but "hey babe, hate to break it to ya, this is more the norm than an isolated case."

With very little exchanges of dialogue this film relies on narration and the camera to tell its story. Unfortunately the narration is riddled with self pity and sorrow with an amount of introspection that rivals a song by the ultra annoying and talentless band Live

Much of *Killer* looks like a skate video. The skating scenes apparently represent a release

IS LUNA NO LONGER ON THE FRINGE?

WITH THE RELEASE OF THEIR THIRD full-length album, *Penthouse*, the quartet collectively known as Luna find themselves in a very awkward position as they attempt to break out of the critical acclaim zone and break into the arena of popular acceptance. Their previous effort *Bewitched* (1994) showed a mellower side of a band that played catchy tunes containing dry sarcastic wit beneath a thin veneer of pleasantry. One of the first things that you notice when meeting the band is that they are neither condescending nor bogged down in a bloated state of self importance—traits that distinguish them from many of their peers. The purpose of the band is to make good music not to make a spectacle of themselves—a novel concept that Luna embraces. Now the band is primed to promote *Penthouse*, which means making videos, a truism that most bands hate.

On this day Luna find themselves in garb that's almost as eye-catching as the setting, deep in the heart of Los Angeles's Chinatown. In charge of it all is filmmaker Steve Hanft. Hanft is the man most notably responsible for his making pieces for artists such as Beck and Luscious Jackson but today he is standing in the midst of a smoke filled Chinese cocktail lounge ornamented with lounge lizards and colorful exotic drinks. The video is for the first release, *Chinatown*, and Hanft has the band twirling around the small dance floor to a choreographed dance. The dance number appears to be quiet an effort especially for band members Sean Eden and Stuart Demenski, who don't appear to be at ease with the whole idea but realize they are in capable hands. Hanft feels that this piece is pretty self explanatory. "It's about staying out all night in an exotic place doing weird things and paying for it the next day," the director explains adding that it's a ritual he's accustomed to.

Between shots, I have a chance to talk with the band members individually and find that for the most part they are big supporters of underground cinema. Lead guitarist Sean is well acquainted with the Todd Phillips documentary *Hated*, a film that is near and dear to the hearts of most of our readers. New Zealand-native and bassist Justin Harwood and I talk about the burgeoning New Zealand film scene spearheaded by auteur's

Peter Jackson and Lee Tamohori, the later of whom's film *Once Were Warriors* immediately becomes a topic of interest. It will alarm most of you to know that Justin feels that the film *does* accurately depict one aspect of New Zealand life. He tells me stories about some of the pubs that seem all too similar to the one frequented by Jake the Mus and his violent beer guzzling

comrades. By the way any filmmakers out there who are interested, Justin is available to play a European bad guy in your next project. (His head is already shaved making him suitable for the role.) It seems that the real movie critic of the band is frontman and reluctant heartthrob Dean Wareham, who's wife is a filmmaker. Her most recent project is currently making the festival rounds. We briefly discuss the reality of independent filmmaking eventually agreeing that it's not the best way to make money.

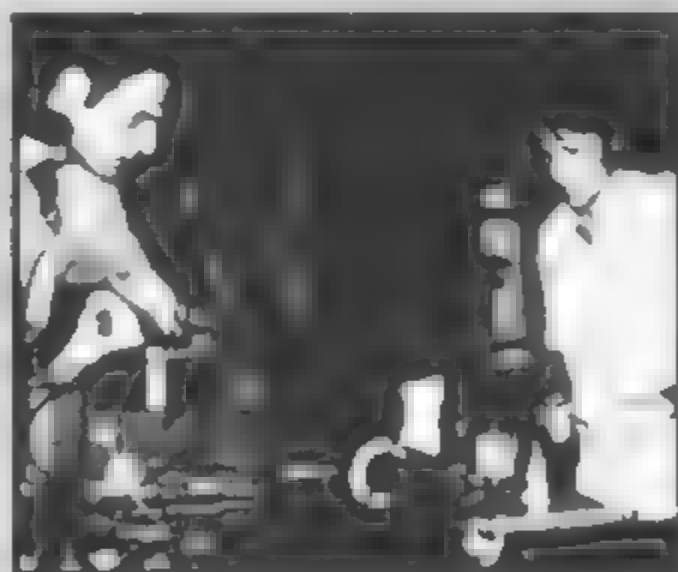
Released last August the new album shows a different side of Luna featuring a

higher production value and more jams. The album will be accompanied by a tour, a prospect that brings mixed emotions from the band. Hopefully the video will catch the eye of MTV and catapult this band to their long deserved exposure.

In the fall Steve Hanft's feature *Kill The Moonlight* will be released. The film centers on the perils of a young man who is desperate to raise three thousand dollars so he can enter his car in a stock car race. His desperation leads him into a life of crime in pursuit of his goal. *Kill The Moonlight* is very amusing in its depiction of a man who attempts to break out of his life as a part-time attendant at a fishery and into the big leagues of stock



Reluctant heartthrob and Luna frontman Dean struts his stuff



Director Hanft and his crew ready another shot.



Hey, isn't Divine...?

car auto racing. Along the way he interacts with an estranged ex-wife, a semi-love interest who derives her income from being an exotic dancer and his father who is plagued by his failure to achieve his dream of becoming a Matador. It's supported by an excellent soundtrack featuring music by Beck and the Melvins amongst others. With this film Hanft shows that Kevin Smith is not the only young filmmaker who knows how to make a feature. However unlike Smith's *Clerks*, *Kill The Moonlight* presents a man who aspires to rise above mediocrity and into the driver seat of a souped-up Chevy.

---Hiram Todd Norman



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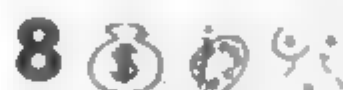
Although some excellent footage—it looked like a video for Sonic Youth, Agent Orange or a reunion video for The Bones Brigade—helped the look of the film, it's hindered by a weak plot and uninspired performances. While *Killer In The House* exemplifies a decent effort, it is forgettable.

—Maximilian Graves

CRACKING UP

93min/16mm

Foolish Mortal Films Inc.



Wow! I finally get to review a real movie! No dopey, schlocky horror flick or overly-pretentious artsy crap, but an honest-to-God movie, complete with complex, three-dimensional characters and a coherent story! It's been so long since I've written about one of these animals, I've almost forgotten how. Fortunately, this superb (very) dark dramedy from writer/director Matt Mitler provides plenty of inspiration.

Cracking Up tells the sordid, tragi-comic tale of Danny Gold, an overly-aggressive, aspiring stand-up and drama geek, played to the hilt by Mitler himself. Gold goes to excessive lengths of butt-licking on his way to stardom, exhibiting absolutely no scruples and stepping on anyone he perceives as being in the way.

Ultimately, he gets his big break. But his

constant accumulation of bad karma, combined with the strains of constantly being "on" and an abundance of substance abuse inevitably (and predictably, unfortunately), leads to Gold reaching the state of mind the film's title implies. After that, I ain't tellin.' Buy it and find out.

This is one slick little movie here. Well-produced, smartly written, professionally acted and soundly shot, it's the best review subject to cross my VCR's tape heads in a long time. Mitler's manic turn as Gold is infectious in a disturbing way. Imagine someone who resembles Christian Slater, hyped-up like Robin Williams in his Mork days playing Bob Fosse in *All That Jazz* and you've got a pretty good idea what this film is like. (Actually, I "only" gave the film an "8" primarily because of the resemblance to that movie. Well, that and the fact that we see Mitler's butt and 'nads several times but we never see any boobs in the whole film. That sucked!) Still, I enjoyed the hell out of it.

—MB

PARANOID SCHIZO TEENS

23mins/16mm

An Alex Chapunoff Film



Rarely will an audience of people not related in some way, to a novice filmmaker, see the humor or genius in his or her prolific statement. Such is also the case with Alex Chapunoff's *Paranoid Schizo Teens*.

Besides the more obvious downfalls such as poor sound, lighting, print quality etc., the film is such an obvious cine-masturbation that one can't help but yawn after the first couple of minutes.

Ostensibly, it is a collection of insane locales that the teenagers of the present call home. With intentional pretense and exaggerated over-

dubbed voices, Chapunoff tries to explain why today's youth are so screwed up.

The problem is, none of his set-ups are really very interesting. There is such an effort to make their mumblings seem hiply bizarre, that they don't make the comic leap that he is going after. In a drawn-out beach scene, the cryptic narration of loony poetic prose—intended to be funny—is so dull that one can't help but be happy when the next scene appears.

If there is anything interesting about the film, it comes towards the end with some slightly amusing McDonald's bashing at the hands of a quirky clown named Donald McDonald. Along with his side-kick Grim-ass, the two try and poison the minds of some kindergartners with corporate propaganda and hamburgers.

The urge to shock or alienate the audience is apparently too much for Chapunoff to overcome though. With so much emphasis placed on being weird—for weird's sake—*Paranoid* simply shows what too much thinking can do to a film.

—JB

THE SECOND ROOM

22mins/16mm

A Bryan W. Simon Flick



With some intricate plot twists, great cinematography and a fine cast, director Bryan W. Simon has made a most enjoyable film in *The Second Room*.

Stanley is a typical middle-class working stiff. The kind of guy that works a shitty job and doesn't have the clout or the charisma to get a woman. While eating lunch one day, Stan bumps into a woman that will haunt him in a different way for the rest of his life.

Instantly in love, Stanley shifts all of his desires to the woman. Through what appears

HANGING AT KUBRICK'S HOUSE WITH MACHINES OF LOVING GRACE

IT WAS IN AN OLD HOTEL NEAR DOWNTOWN Los Angeles that I first got a glimpse at the weirdness of director Jonathan Reiss and the members of Atlantic recording artists Machines of Loving Grace. I should have known that Reiss—whose previous work with Survival Research Laboratories documented machines trying to dismantle one another, and whose Nine Inch Nails "Happiness In Slavery" video scared the hell out of many a male—would have had something maniacal in mind. But then again I thought, "This is the same guy who shot the last Black Crowes video. I mean, how out of hand *can* this get?" The answer, very.

On this very ordinary day something extraordinary was happening at the infamous Ambassador Hotel. The video, a piece for the song "Richest Junkie Still Alive" from their latest disc, *Gilt*, was being shot in the desolate halls of a rumored-to-be haunted site. The hotel was shut down some years back but is still being used as a location for films and videos. Scenes from *Barton Fink* were shot here, but that's not why the Ambassador is famous. This is the place where Attorney General and presidential nominee Robert F. Kennedy was shot and killed by Sirhan Sirhan while giving a speech at a campaign fund raiser. In the wake of this gruesome history-shaping tidbit of horror, the Ambassador, which had previously flourished, never recovered.

The inspiration for the video came from Stanley Kubrick's modern horror classic *The Shining*. It's a natural that a band that has several film school alums for members—singer Scott Benzel and guitarist Greg Suran—would find inspiration for a video in the work of one of cinema's most innovative and misunderstood directors. Not unlike the scene that takes place in *The Shining*'s Overlook Hotel, Scott figured filming a young kid riding around on a big wheel through the halls of the Ambassador discovering bizarre inhabitants would be a cool visual. Reiss took the idea and built on it and introduced the video's main character, an aging old man in a wheelchair connected to various IV sacks—the tune's titular junkie. It seems the man is on the verge of dying just managing to cling onto the last vestiges of life, feeding off those around him. He drinks milk out of a baby's bottle and is accompanied by his gorgeous nurse in a French maid's outfit. As he's wheeled from room to room, and through the lens of a Steadicam, he discover an assortment of strange characters attending their own private party.

One of the most striking aspects of the piece was the set decoration in the various rooms. Each was painted a different color—two striking examples were a lovely lime green and sky blue—and then filled with Sixties furniture to help establish the era that Reiss was aiming for.

One particularly artistic moment happened as the young boy on his Big Wheel passes a middle-aged couple, whose heads are



Big Wheel boy cruises the Ambassador.



Machines of Loving Grace

hooded with sackcloth, embrace. The inspiration for their embrace came to Reiss from a Matisse painting that evoked similar images. At the same time a man passes by in the background wearing a bunny suit which is a homage to the notorious freeze-frame bear-suit scene from *The Shining*. All this bizarness was accented further by paintings of sad clowns and lost kirtens—some of them were even on *velvet*.

One area of the hotel that was not available for use was the kitchen where Kennedy's body was brought moments after his assassination. Parts of the blood stained linoleum floor were removed and sent back to Washington for analysis by the F.B.I. But what self-respecting band, with a weakness for the morbid and a lead singer who is a self admitted JFK/RFK buff, would allow a few locked doors and police signs to stop them? We found our way into the notorious kitchen and had time to talk about the band's new album and some of the perception prob-

lems the band has come across. Machines have been rather erroneously labeled by critics as "industrial," a tag they don't readily embrace. The band features several elements that clearly make them more of a hard rock band akin to Tool or Faith No More—but they do enjoy a good metallic-crunch sampling with the best of them.



Setting up the next take on "Richest Junkie."

After several hours, the set was getting to me. I had spent a day talking with a really good band about everything from why *Kids* really did not deserve an NC-17 rating to the worst part about the *Traces of Death* video series ("the lame death metal music" they remark) in a most surreal setting courtesy of Mr. Reiss.

As you know, some of John Reiss' best work, the "Slavery" piece, will never be shown on MTV but this most recent effort has the potential to be very popular. The strength of the "Richest Junkie Still Alive" is that Reiss has been able to create a haunting and disturbing work that does not resort to blatant graphic imagery.

Not that he wouldn't have if they had let him. If you can find it, check out Slayer's "Serenity in Murder" for his most recent cinematrocities.

—Hiram Todd Norman



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to be psychotherapy, Stanley realizes the troubled situation love has put him. With the help of flashbacks, we realize that the story he is telling his shrink, in no way gels with what really happened between him and the mysterious woman.

Director Simon takes great care in making sure we don't immediately catch on to how fucked up Stanley really is. We are taken on a tour that becomes more and more delusional until, almost by accident, it becomes obvious that our protagonist is really stalking this woman.

The ambiance by director of photography Lloyd Freidus and the screenplay by Ron Winterstein really make the film work. With plenty of imagery and some marvelous camera work, it is easy to just float into the dementia Stanley is going through. Richard Neil is very effective as the troubled, yet likeable Stanley, and C.C. Pulitzer is somewhat haunting in the role of Stanley's unknowing conquest.

Add to this a good score and the look of a film that can only come with some real money, *The Second Room* is a hot feature from a director to be on the look for.

—JB

NO RESIS- TANCE

85mins/Video
Lunatic Fringe Productions

7

The word 'cyber-punk' springs immediately to mind when you see this movie. It's

essentially the story of a *Johnny Mnemonic*-style computer hacker. The major difference here is that this story doesn't suck. Fortunately for us, *No Resistance* is nothing like your typical big budget Hollywood production. While perhaps not quite as visually impressive it actually has a story.

The main character is a war veteran from a future war. Whatever his state of mind before the war, he comes out of it a paranoid, pessimistic, drug-addicted scumbag. His dealings as a mercenary computer hacker are all he has to support his habit. The guy seems to be making nothing but enemies until he meets his latest client, a young, insane nympho girl who insists on giving him sex as a bonus to his fee. And in the style of *Johnny Mnemonic*, our hero/anti-hero becomes a courier, but as he soon discovers, what he's really carrying is a sexually transmitted disease that's been engineered by humans.

One of the main drawbacks to this movie is it's shot entirely on camcorder. But if you took the same script, actors and locations and put it on film it would simply look much better.

Still, *No Resistance* has a great story. The plot twists are both unexpected and surprising. The characters are actually well thought out and realistic. Kudos to star and creator of the movie, David Rains. This is definitely a talent to look out for.

However as good as Mr. Rains' acting is, the rest of the cast is sadly lacking in talent. The word 'wooden' comes to mind.

But if you can get past some of the cheap acting and production qualities, we have a great story here.

—CC

SNUFF FILMS: AN EXPOSE

7mins. 16mm/B&W
Heckfire Pictures

4

An extremely short film that purports to be an exposé on snuff films, but is in fact nothing of the sort. A mere seven minutes long with a very brief introduction by Conrad Brooks (*Plan 9, Glen or Glenda*), *Snuff Films: An Expose* is an odd piece of mock snuff footage which the filmmaker claims was recovered by police in Mexico. This should alert us that the whole thing is a big cinematic fabrication because, as we all know, Mexican police can't even catch a case of the clap, let alone an actual piece of snuff. Actually, the film doesn't even try to be taken seriously despite the ominous warnings all over the video box, and those from Mr. Brooks, that persons with weak hearts or stomachs should not be viewing it.

In a nutshell, a woman is held hostage in a basement, allegedly somewhere in Tijuana. Three men who look like they just stepped out of a Chicano version of *Deliverance* hover around her looking, well, Mexican, I guess. Pseudo-Mexican actually. Like, if the missing link were Mexican, it would be these three guys in their Ambervision sunglasses. While they hover, the woman yells a lot. They pack their lips and gums full of chewing tobacco, and the woman continues to scream.

Then they try to pack some into her face and she fights them off until a couple of guys come in and shoot the Mexicans. And that's it. That's the end. It's a real fizzle. I'm actually at a loss to find anything to critique. There's no story to speak of. No dialogue, no interesting cinematography, no special effects. Not even any acting worth mentioning. There's just nothing there. It's like seven minutes of dead air, and all it's done is brought me 420 seconds closer to death.

—SR

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—GG ALLIN

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"...a rebel with a cause and that cause is rebellion itself."

—Maximum Rockwell

HATED lies somewhere between the satanic world of **SPINAL TAP** and the tragic world of **DECEIVERS**.

—The Village Voice

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**SPECIAL
REPORT**

UP FROM THE DEPTHS

Despite the fact that every night of The New York Underground Film Festival culminated in a drunken debauchery festival all its own, Williams and Griffin did actually work. No, no, we swear. Honestly. Promise...

Anyone familiar with Todd Phillips, Andrew Goulet and their company, The Union Films company, will know that in the independent and self-proclaimed Kings Of Publicity. While most of their previous work has been in the realm of music, The New York Underground Film Festival

It's a beautiful, highly entertaining film like the pompon-waving, *Chicken Hawk* of NAMBLA documentary *EVERYONE*.

INTERNATION. *And how?* DEWEY

held in the Anthology Film Archives, near the fashionable SoHo district of New York (and closer to the oh-so-hip parts of the East Village), this second effort saw some major changes. First, it had the attractive commercial corporate sponsorship of the giant of Motion Picture Technology, Apple Computers, Drum Tobacco and The Independent Film Channel. All sponsors held a prominent lobby of the beautiful Anthology building which was much looked-up. Undergoers saw what with the bars on the windows and all.

Microsoft has developed a new software which enables users to turn a series of photographs into a virtual tour. The MacKey software, from the FBI, is available at <http://www.fbi.com/mackey>.

BY DOMINIC GRIFFIN

PHOTOS BY DAVID E. WILLIAMS

Downstairs, Drum Tobacco was giving away free product and rolling papers to anyone who'd fill out a form saying how much they liked the stuff. Whilst we couldn't confirm any of the patrons were smoking the tobacco, we can confirm that the rolling papers were being put to terrific use outside the front door.

Incidentally, the booth at which the product was being awarded featured a giant blown-up image from *Pulp Fiction* featuring John Travolta rolling Uma Thurman a Drum ciggie. Quentin Tarantino, Travolta and Miramax were unavailable for comment when we attempted to contact them about the new endorsement deal.

Meanwhile, The Independent Film Channel had a booth that proudly aired their 5-minute commercial boasting clips and



DEINSTAG (ONCE UPON A TUESDAY)

German director Franz Brenner has created a sly masterpiece with his deceiving film. At first an homage, at second a music video but thirdly... Well, wait first.

With creepy strings in the background, the narration begins: "Like every Tuesday at this time, sleep eludes me. I can feel it growing inside me, and like every Tuesday I have to meet her." Shot in gritty B&W 16mm, we see our male hero preparing for the day with a close shave and wash. Then the rock music ticks in as if it's a music video. The lad—despite his Corey Haimesque looks—is cool as he struts down some nebulous high street. Pausing, he orders a cold beer and reads the paper. Then he tells us he's going off to his usual "rendezvous" place—where he waits until his girl arrives: a bleach blonde alterna-chick. He follows her home in what at first appears to be a lover's game. However, as he smacks her head against her apartment door to the happy summer refrain of "Everybody Loves Me," we realize something is amiss. Our hero is not only stalking the girl, but is—like he does every Tuesday—going to brutally beat her to death before engaging in a little necromantik activity. Of particular note is the actual beating. With a hatchet, he hacks away at her head, causing the blood to spurt on the wall in magnificent *Evil Dead 2*-type showmen. We don't get to see this, but we do hear the act with rather convincingly—and fringe-inducing—sound FX. Sick, disturbing, disgusting and we highly recommend it.

soundbites from such "independent film" luminaries as Oliver Stone, Robert Altman, Spike Lee and Marty Scorsese. Even though they weren't giving away such useful items as "skins," there were free dog tags to be had with "Independent Film Channel" proudly emblazoned on them.

And to get one, all you had to do was fill out *another* form saying how much you wanted the channel on your cable system. Molson just had a sign in the lobby telling us to be "Cool As Ice" but they were also sponsoring the opening night party where surely they'd be giving away lashings of beer. Well, we'll get to that later. Firstly, the concept of large multinational corporations—who are infamous for taking people's identities away—sponsoring the epitome of free artistic



Our Travis Bicket-worshipping killer (Thomas Kurz) from *Deinstag* has a penchant for blondes (Ute Bachner). Writer/director Franz Brenner (left) looks reasonably sane.

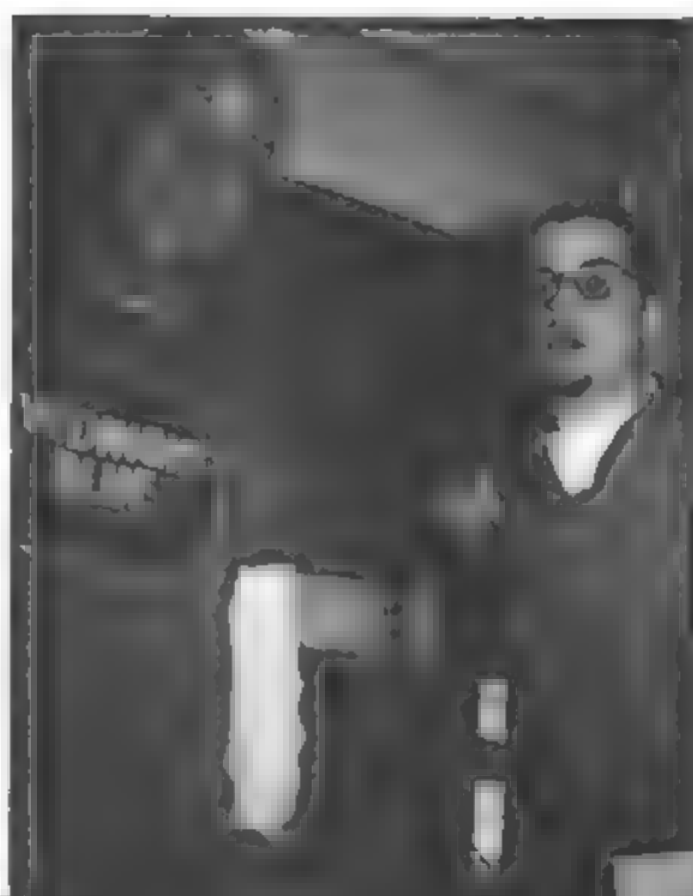
expression reeks of hypocrisy. Or does it? "Sell Out!" we heard someone cry. "Oh shut up you miserable twat," is probably what the benefactors of such sponsorship would like to yell back. Certainly, the festival wouldn't have occurred at all without such cash help from the big companies which would do very little for the struggling filmmakers and their audiences. Organizers Andrew Gurland and Todd Phillips were more than happy to respond to the "sell out" charges—as they counted their money.

Dressed alike in their uniform of dirty jeans, Harley-Davidson wallet, work boots and hooded flannel jackets, the pair explained, in unison:

Corporate sponsors enable us to extend the length of the festival, include more films and extend our advertising." Then Phillips took over, saying, "The goal of our festival is to show as many films as possible to as big an audience as possible and our sponsors meet that goal." "Yeah," agreed Gurland. "Government funding and foundation grants are far too scarce nowadays and frankly, we'd rather see that money put toward film production."

Secondly, like it or not, *Pulp Fiction* has shown to the populace at large that independent films can indeed be worthy of attention. The benefit for NYUFF was that virtually every screening was sold-out within hours of tickets going on.

Crowds literally swarmed the Festival in what is otherwise a semi-deserted section of town. (The iron bars, grime and street fires gave that little fact a twist—though it *was* NYC.) This kind of reaction to films, that previously no one has ever seen, is nothing short of astounding. Unlike other festivals where the arts are shamefully ignored, they were



Fest gurus Todd Phillips and Andrew Gurland make a clean sweep during the opening night.

"The goal of our festival is to show as many films as possible to as big an audience as possible and our sponsors help meet that goal."

GURLAND & PHILLIPS ON CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP



We found old-school FT fan Bump at the bar.



Dominic lived up to his rep, but still couldn't drink as much as Williams.

the best-attended programs at NYUFF. And for very good reason. There were some excellent films to see.

But what about the parties? Opening night

began with Jon Moritsugu's *Mod Fuck Explosion*, a surrealistically-staged film about two teens—the pouty London and her sensitive boyfriend, M-16—who are desperately trying to make their way in a world of violence and prejudice. Oft funny and sometimes metaphorical, the crowd loved it. Afterwards, the raucous opening night party kicked off at Coney Island High, a grungy club in the East Village. Once again, the STF Jads pulled through by convincing melodic thrash band Helmet to

perform a comparatively intimate set in front of 300 drunken, sweaty, punky film fans and assorted dignitaries. As the band did their best to induce

permanent hearing damage downstairs, VIP revelers watched the show on monitors upstairs—in relative serenity. Amongst them

were Festival special guest John Waters (seen winning to Helmet's deluge of sound. Four of his

flicks were screened over the course of the weekend) and three of the surviving members of the Murder Junkies, including Merle Allin, brother to the late frontman, GG. Rumors swirled around the club that Merle is considering putting the band back together for one more tour. We can only



Richard Kern takes his vitamins.



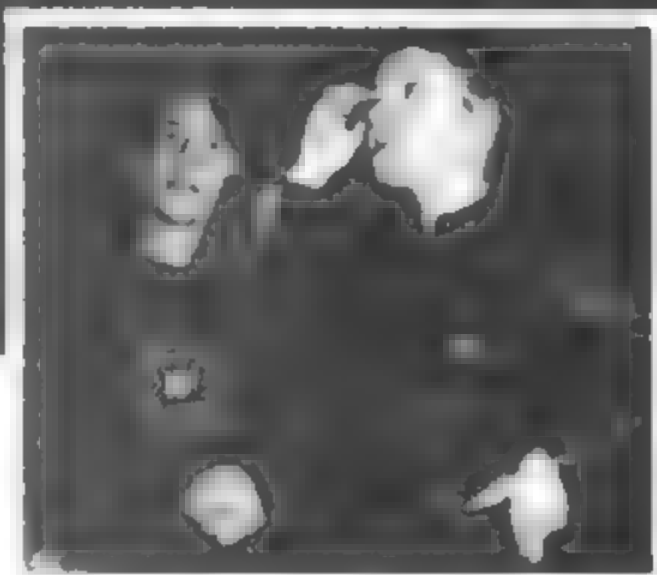
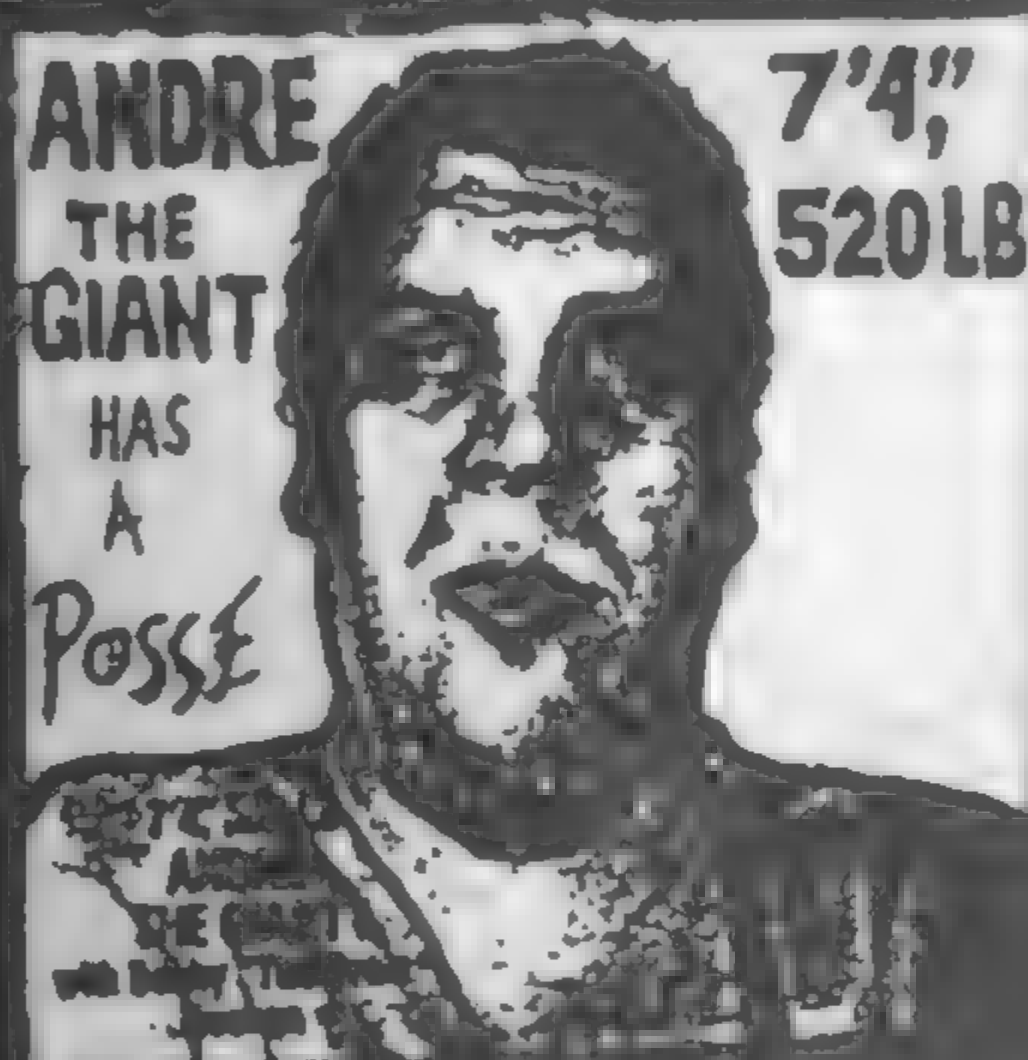
Filmmaker Guy Benoit (Crosley Five) came to party.

hope and *pray*. However, one factor dampened an otherwise perfect party: Those cheap bastards at Molson didn't supply any free beer! Not even for John-Bleedin'-Waters. But, we figured, it must have been an oversight. Surely those friendly Canucks would supply the booze at the Molson-sponsored bashes announced for the rest of the week. *eh? Wrong!* Although the suds company could find it in their



ANDRE THE GIANT HAS A POSSE

You've seen the term "roadie" used and misused, yet intriguing B&W stickers everywhere. Emblazoned across them all is the hardy, amiable, yet very characteristic image of the late wrestling sensation Andre The Giant along with his stats: 7'4", 520 lb. From MTV to Graceland to Jim Morrison's grave to the wall of your local Eleven, they're everywhere. But where the hell did they come from? Director Helen Stickler (*Queen Mercy*) unravels the mystery in her new documentary *Andre The Giant Has A Posse*. Shot on Hi-8, the doc spends most of its time interviewing the graphic designer who started the phenomenon, Shepard Fairey. The Andre movement originally started in Providence, RI with Fairey and a couple of skater buddies. Because most other skaters seemed to have a posse, they wanted their own—but they didn't want to take it too seriously. "You can't really dislike it all because it's so stupid," reasons Fairey. "Just think he looks so funny." He reckons he's made 400,000 of the stickers himself, while others have collected many more. Curious fallout from the Andre phenom has been Providence mayor Vincent "Buddy Cianci" getting in on the act. Fairey posted Andre's head atop one of Cianci's billboards for the entire city to see during a recent election. As Cianci talks in the film, he was perturbed at first, but (even the politician) stilled by putting his own image over dozens of the original Andre stickers. However, to all the fans of the Posse Party—which claims to have no agenda—perhaps it's getting a bit out of hand. While Fairey giggles at how seriously some are taking his Andre work, he seems to encourage the image. "Who's taking it too seriously?" On the other hand, an ATGHAP sticker dominates the urinal of my favorite bar. *Piss on Andre?* Is this a statement on the statement that Fairey's movement is making? Or is it a statement on the statement on



Andre-mania creator Shepard Fairey and Helen Stickler ponder a question after their GIANT screening.

budget to announce in the local paper that they were sponsoring the NYUFF soirees at various taverns around the city—which naturally sold their product—there was a better chance of you seeing Sharon Stone show up in one of the films than there was scoring free booze





Guest of Honor John Waters tolerates Todd Phillips.

Despite not featuring a film whose main character was a creepy 55-year old pedophile, the Fest *did* attract some controversy before the screening had even begun. The object of

all the attention? A 12-minute documentary by Detroit denizen Mike White, entitled *Who Do You Think You're Fooling?* By now everyone is aware of the *Reservoir Dogs*, *City On Fire* controversy, but White predated the rage by a year when he decided to intercut dialog and action from both films—managing to produce a very funny, insightful and wonderfully illegal piece. And although some moron at the Fest said maintained “They’re in no way similar!”

Well, let’s just say, East gets West on some very common ground. A week before the festival began, local press picked up on *Fooling?*, which subsequently attracted stories from *Entertainment Tonight*, *Red Copy* and a variety of other national

“news organizations.” In an effort to try and diffuse the attention, Phillips actually considered pulling the film—or so he says. “Look, I like what Tarantino does. He’s a great director. There’s no need for this negative concentration on this one film.” To Phillips and Gurland’s credit, they refused to allow the media to focus on White’s film—but rather they deftly allowed the press to focus on what they felt were the real important elements: Themselves and their festival. Naturally, *Who Do You Think You're Fooling?* sold out and the boys had to add several more screenings.

Among the features that demanded attention were Rachel Amodio’s debut, *What About Me* (featured in FTVG #13), *Highway Of Heartache* (a campy musical in the Waters vein—but far from being as entertaining) and *I Am A Sex Addict* (also featured in last issue with some nifty stills). But NYUFF is less about features than it is all other films that don’t follow a format or fill a



Dom considers sabotage during one particularly shitty film.

but Clayton Ellis’ faux-documentary *The Road Taken* may just have been one of the best attempts screened. Mike, a documentary filmmaker sets out to interview his boyhood friend, a guido by the name of Jeremy—who has just been released from prison. Full of *Spinal Tap* mishaps and *Man Bites Dog* riffs, Jeremy decides to take the crew hostage

and rob banks in a hysterical adventure. Though only 22 minutes long, watch out for this film to show up in feature form soon. Also of great interest was *Deinstag* (see sidebar), *Andre Has A Giant Posse* (see sidebar), *The Operation* (yeah, another sidebar), *Crackin’ Up* (see Scan section), *Krazy Teens USA* (see Scan section) and *Lick Of Fury* (see Scan section, yet again)



The surviving members of GG Allin’s band The Murder Junkies got drunk and belligerent. (Well, not really...) Is a reunion in Hell imminent?

set time frame. (Yeah, ‘cause everybody’s too broke to do it—DEW)

It’s often rare to find a movie that can please subversive and mainstream tastes

While hardly any of these films will be gracing your local cineplex

soon (though many show up on the latest *Best Of* collection), the NYUFF was too good to be ignored. The fest gave subversive and

imaginative filmmakers a platform for their innovative work—and there were plenty of haughty NYC chicks to hit on Good Show. **[mg]**

“Government funding and foundation grants are far too scarce nowadays and frankly, we’d rather see that money put toward film production.”

—FEST CO-ORGANIZER ANDREW GURLAND

THE OPERATION

Without a doubt the most innovative film screened at the Fest was Jacob Pander's *The Operation*. Although only 10 minutes long, it had created a huge buzz before its 11:15 screening on Saturday night. So much in fact that we were forced to witness its debut from the

projection room. But it was more than worth it. Fundamentally, the film's narrative is right out of a porn film as a team of surgeons lead a stretched man into the O.R. and—very quickly—a female "doctor" begins a very explicit physical examination. Pander is a little more circumspect with his description, saying, "It's a graphically explicit erotic film." Regardless of the gyno content, *The Operation's* major appeal comes from how it was filmed. He is equally cryptic about how he came up with his equipment. After a few phone calls, Pander found himself in the possession of a black-and-white infrared camera, which only reads heat. Anything cold shows up black and anything hot shows up as white. You get the idea. Adding to the strange visual sensation is a sensor in the camera that reads body liquid as dark but as soon as it exits the body and hits the air, it shines bright white.

(Apparently, the device was used by the troops in the Civil War to monitor night movements by the enemy. This camera is worth \$\$). The procurement of the camera aside, Pander managed to keep the budget of *The Operation* under

\$1,500. After receiving the equipment by "surprise," Pander was forced to quickly get his film in production. After acquiring *Ferrum 5000* director Steve Doughton as foot of the film, Pander quickly put together his script and locations. The actual sex scenes were staged in his father's painting studio and the O.R. sequences were shot in a local school hall. The entire shoot lasted two exhausting days with no sleep, says Pander. The 30-year-old Portland native may be known to comic readers as half of the Pander Brothers who produced such cult comic as *Grondel* and *Triple X*. As the filmmaker

explains, the use of the infrared camera—though expensive—did have its advantages. "The lighting we used was only enough so we could see what we were doing. We're not seeing real light in the film. Pander never ever expected the reaction he has gotten from *The Operation*, but film festivals as mainstream as Toronto's are asking for copies, as have many a band member looking for ways to inject new visuals into the tired music video scene. Pander remembers the shoot as something unique in itself. "It felt really special when we were shooting, 'cause we knew nobody else was doing this. It's definitely an extension of integrating erotica into film without being frank." For Pander, the next step is to set up a music video production company and hope to make a living in that largely stagnant arena.



Forget the *X-Files*. This flick has all the sci-fi kinkiness you can stand.



Operation director Jacob Pander.



LETHA



LATEX PHOTOS STYLING PAUL RAY



L I M A G E S



Ace photographer JUSTICE HOWARD wants her work to inspire a reaction. Indeed.

SOMEONE ONCE SAID THAT MY PHOTOGRAPHS make you say 'Holy Fuck.' I feel only after you go 'Holy Fuck' has a photograph done its job," notes Justice Howard candidly. "I set out to do what I have designated as strong imagery, which to me is something that garners reaction." But don't think Howard is just out to shock for the sake of shocking. Rather her images are well thought-out scenes from movies that don't exist beyond the mind of the well-respected photographer. When you first eye her work and see the participants, you want to know more about them. Appearing as more than mere models, the captured subjects seem like dark characters from a noir-thriller with a

secret to hide. How did the girl write that on her back? Why is the woman at the grave-side? Is she being contemptuous or is she in fact paying homage to a departed soul? Shooting in black-and-white under stark and definable lighting, Howard is quickly becoming a name to be reckoned with in the fetish photography market. More thought-provoking than exploitive, she's arguably forging new ground in the art-form. Studying for years under a Canadian master, Howard, at one point, dropped photography to pursue modeling but was drawn back behind the camera almost 3 years ago. Only certain that she wanted to make art with her camera, she was unsure at first what her subject matter would be

I N T E R V I E W B Y D A V I D E . W I L L I A M S



WILDASIN



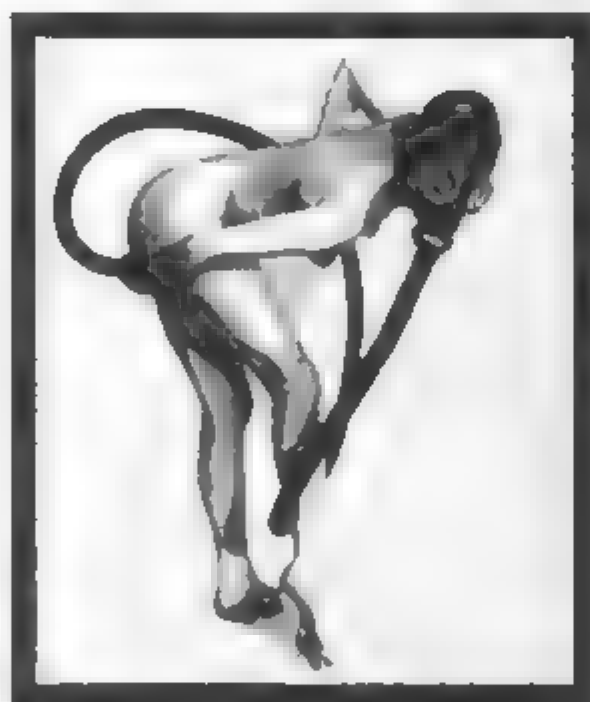
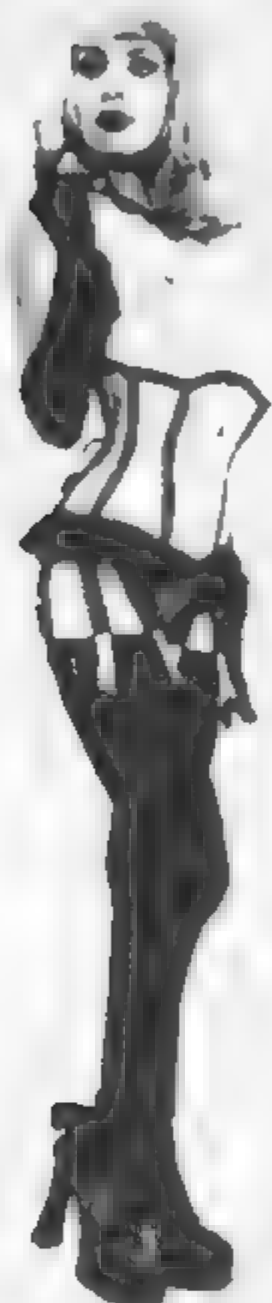
I'LL PISS ON YOUR GRAVE



STYLIST: HENRY MARTINEZ



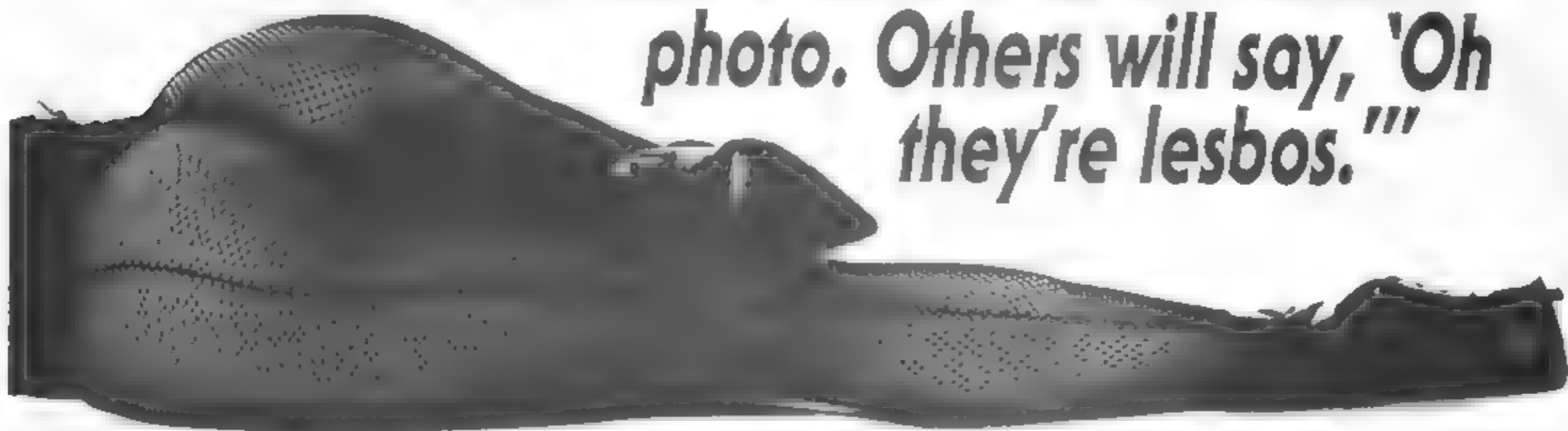
SELF-PORTRAIT



A black and white photograph of a person's back, seen from behind. The person is wearing a dark, possibly leather, jacket or vest. On the bare skin of their back, a list of ten things to 'fuck' is written in a bold, hand-drawn, sans-serif font. The list is arranged in a vertical column, starting from the upper back and ending near the waist. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

FUCK CD'S
FUCK FASHION
FUCK MTV
FUCK^{THE} L.A. WEAKLY
FUCK HELMETS
FUCK PSYCHIC FRIENDS
FUCK GRUNGE
FUCK DECEIT
FUCK CRITICS
FUCK SCIENTOLOGY

CARNIVAL PICTURE: "You can tell a lot about people just by the way they perceive a photo. My girlfriend has that on her wall strictly so she can see where her friend's minds are at. People with class notice it as a beautiful photo. Others will say, 'Oh they're lesbos.'"



"It's really hard to find your niche right away. I started doing motorcycle images, girls on motorbikes etc. But it really wasn't working. I knew I needed to change."

Noticing that people were talking about wilder and more daring images such as those found in Madonna's *Sex* book (shot by Steven Meisel), Howard made up her mind in what direction her photos would take. "I flip-flopped. I used to shoot a lot of vivacious colors. But now I only shoot black-and-white unless a client wants color."

And I started shooting fine art fetishy erotica. It wasn't long before her work was noticed. And as she refuses to title any of her photos (apart from the aptly "I'll Piss On Your Grave"), all of Howard's images are part of an on-going series very-aptly called *Black And White And Brutal*.

A huge fan of famed *Vogue* fashion photographer Helmut Newton, the first thing Howard does before she visualizes an image is ask herself how she can get away from the generics of photography that seem to permeate the trade. "I really like to put women in really strange locations—where you're forced to ask yourself, 'What are these women doing here dressed in garters at the carnival ride?'"



Aside from the exotic characters who star in her photos, there are various important considerations, says Howard, that help define her style. "I shoot in very bad areas. I shoot down in South Central a lot. 85 percent of my shoots are at night. Basically I do a kamikaze and I just go out and do it—lay down the image and get out of there."

Even though a security guard accompanies Howard and her models, things can still get a little hairy on location without permits. "For a while I was into the gritty street look of railway

tracks and parking lots full of tires. Once we were shooting down there [South Central] and these kids started throwing rocks at us. I just happened to have an M80 in my car so I got my guy model to toss it at them. It went BOOM and rocked the whole neighborhood. It was wild, but they didn't toss any more rocks. Now the police helicopter was a different story..." **[TV-14]**

Howard recently completed a video catalog of her work—complete with plenty of behind-the-scenes action and a huge library of stills—and is working on a book. Adding to her "indie street cred" is a recent photo sale to members of the Red Hot Chili Peppers and the reincarnation of her sexy nun (seen on p47) as a tattoo on guitarist Dave Navarro.

**TELEVISION AND
RADIO HAVE
LONG IGNORED
CALIFORNIA'S
PREMIERE
THRASHMEISTERS.
BUT THAT HASN'T
STOPPED
PENNYWISE FROM
BECOMING
AMERICA'S MOST
POPULAR PUNK
BAND. FILMMAKER
DARREN DOANE
DOCUMENTS A
YEAR'S WORTH OF
ANTICS FROM BOB
DOLE'S WORST
NIGHTMARE IN
PENNYWISE
HOME MOVIES**



NO LO POUND F

by David J

IF YOU TRY TO ESCAPE, I'LL CUT THE TIRES on your truck," warns Fletcher Dragee, guitarist for the Hermosa Beach-based punk band Pennywise. "I'll buy you new tires in the morning, but if you try to leave, your tires are gone." Without the slightest doubt he was serious, I continued to follow Fletcher on his destructive adventure through South Bay, Los Angeles. By the time he gave me permission to leave, the sun was breaking over the eastern horizon.

The night had begun with an extensive band interview in which Fletcher confessed to actions that suggest something's amiss in his sociological framework. After he finished telling stories of riding trucks into high school classrooms and breaking into a closed restaurant for a midnight snack, he decided to prove he was telling the truth. Establishing that I couldn't leave until he decided the night was through, Fletcher took me on an all-night rampage that included him urinating on someone in a public restaurant, breaking into the Huntington Beach mayor's house to drink beer, and even attempting to use the Redondo Beach pier as an obstacle course for his power boat. While I'd never been more afraid, I ended the night neither hurt nor uri-



Pennywise is: (LtoR) Jason Thirsk (bass), Jim Linberg (vocals), Fletcher Dragee (guitar) and Byron McMackin (drums).

PUNYGER OOLISH

nated upon—for which I was most grateful

While the proceeding sounds outrageous, such actions are normal for Fletcher, lending to the band's reputation for doing the most incredible antics imaginable. Then add the fact that vocalist Jim Lindberg, bassist Jason Thirsk and drummer Byron McMackin actually endure these actions and sometimes even participate—one needs little help to conclude how over the edge Pennywise is

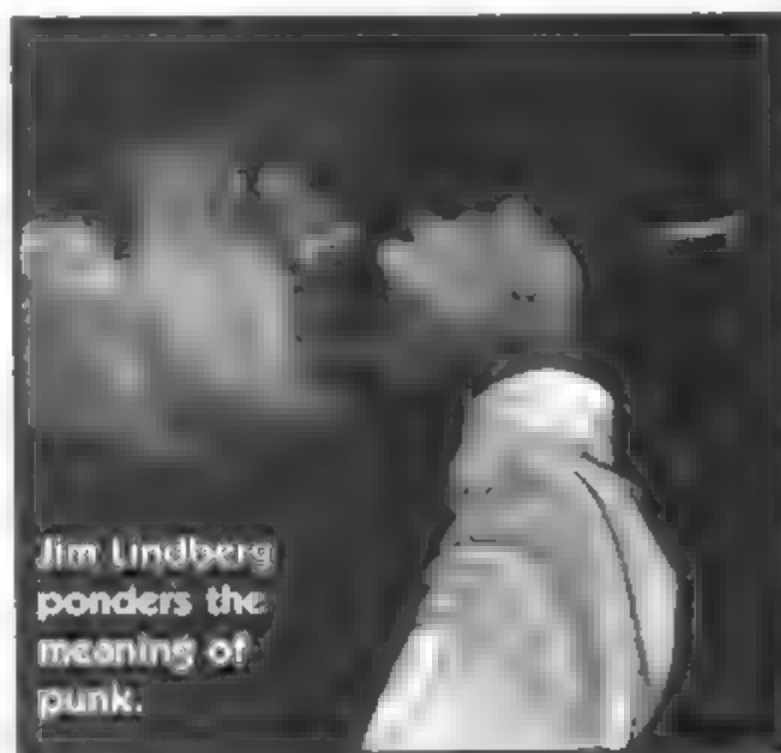
For filmmaker Darren Doane, words in written form weren't enough to communicate Pennywise's fascinating mix of charisma and craziness. No, Darren needed to document such actions—now available for the entire world to witness in *Pennywise Home Movies*, a 45-minute video featuring live footage and off-the-wall action filmed at numerous places across the globe—covering over a year of the band's life

The relationship between Pennywise and Doane dates back to 1993 when the band was about to release their second album, *Unknown Road*. Doane, who was then heading the Malibu Comics film division, was spending a great deal of time with his girlfriend loafing in Hermosa Beach. One day, before she hopelessly

dumped him, Doane wandered into the local music shrine Alternative Groove—a record store owned by Theologian Records chieftain Mark Theodore, the man who released Pennywise's first two seven inches (now available on compact disc as an EP)

Doane recalls, "While I was looking around the store, Mark and I started talking. He asked what I did for work, and I told him that I'm a filmmaker. He asked if I did videos, and I said I used to—but still would if the band's cool."

Doane left his business card and Fletcher called back three weeks later to



Jim Lindberg ponders the meaning of punk.



discuss doing a video for their upcoming album on Epitaph Records. "We planned to meet in two weeks," remembers Doane. "During that time I started hearing all these stories about how they were the craziest guys in the world and that Fletcher was an animal that starts fires, blows up cars, and riots at shows. I thought, 'Fuck, this is going to be weird.'" Nevertheless, Doane still met with Fletcher.

"I showed up at his house, and he was this huge, enormous man. I reached out my hand to shake and he hesitated. Then he shook it, and explained, 'I don't like touching people.' I thought, 'No problem there.'"

Darren began by showing his video reel, and then Fletcher played

rough mixes from the album. Both highly admired each other's work, so Doane was set to shoot a video for the song "Dying to Know." Soon after, Pennywise also had Doane shoot the video for "Homesick."

Once Darren finished that project, Fletcher let him know he wasn't done with him yet. Doane reflects, "Fletcher said that our next project was the

Pennywise movie. We joked around at first, but then next thing you know we started really talking about it."

Opting to finance the project himself, Doane came up with \$10,000 with which to make the video ultra-high quality while allowing him to retain total creative control. Darren also brought in his film partner Ken Daurio and recent film school

graduate Dan Snow, both of whom had very active and important roles in the production. "I thought it would take about two or three months, but we ended up working on the video for a year and a half. I got so deep into it that I couldn't get out." Or Fletcher wouldn't let him out.



I STARTED HEARING ALL THESE STORIES ABOUT HOW THEY WERE THE CRAZIEST GUYS IN THE WORLD AND THAT FLETCHER WAS AN ANIMAL THAT STARTS FIRES, BLOWS UP CARS, AND RIOTS AT SHOWS. I THOUGHT, 'FUCK, THIS IS GOING TO BE WEIRD.' —DARREN DOANE

Concerning the live footage, Doane took his crew (with anywhere from three to eight cameras) as far as Hawaii and Colorado to film shows and captured the hometown spirit—shooting sold-out shows at the San Diego Sports Arena, The Palladium and the Shrine Auditorium (both in Los Angeles). Doane even acquired footage from a show held in Holland—in which the lighting makes it look like a new wave video.

Songs in *Pennywise Home Movies* include "Unknown Road," "Rules,"

"Pennywise," and remarkably chaotic footage of "Wouldn't it be Nice" taken from the "Homesick" video shoot in Hermosa Beach. Ironically, the live footage suggests Fletcher's abnormality rubs off on the fans—and it's pure comedy watching the them climb all over each other, dive from the stage and balcony, and the occasionally knock heads as two or more attempt to run across the stage at the exact same time.

The video also includes video montages set to "Every Single Day" and a demo version of "Peaceful Day" (released exclusively for this video) both from their new



A View From a Pennywise Stage.

album *About Time*. The montages include tour footage from Europe and their more recent tour of Alaska, Japan, and Australia. In particular, "Every Single Day" includes footage of Fletcher bursting through a locked and deadbolted hotel room door and attacking the members of Blink and Unwritten Law. Fletcher went in with fire extinguishers and live electrical circuits—with which he mercilessly shocked them.

While the live footage is good, the best moments come when watching the band off the stage. Doane interviews the band about everything from the fans, to violence, to their friendship anthem "Bro Hymn." Concerning violence, the band strongly speaks against it, as they often do at shows, but there is also footage of concert chaos—including a clip taken from the network news covering a "riot" at a Pennywise show. The funniest moments,

TOO MEAN FOR THE PEOPLE

DARREN DOANE seriously suggests that the future holds an uncut NC-17 version of *Pennywise: The Movie* as a good deal was edited for reasons of nudity, violence and criminal activity. While this cut is likely a good ways away, both Doane and Pennywise were happy to tell us what we're missing.

Byron begins, "What didn't get used is a lot of really good hash smoking. Major hash parties. You miss a lot of the comedy because it's not funny if you didn't see us smoking hash. The reason Fletcher was covering me with all that shaving cream (in the video) is because I smoked about thirty major hash joints. We smoked these things called Helicopters—like two big joints stuck together. They were major."

Byron also had filmed some major European tourist centers many people would have probably liked to see. He continues, "I snuck my camera into the red light district, which is totally dangerous to do. I had it in my

jacket, and I walked around filming all kinds of nude chicks in the windows. It was cut because we didn't want kids' parents getting pissed at us."

The scene Jim remembers cut-

"One night Fletcher threw up into a bowl and then tore up a bunch of hundred dollar bills and soaked them in the vomit. He let it sit there overnight, and the next morning, he took a spoon and ate all the crusty vomit with the money in it."

—DOANE ON WHAT HIT THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

ting is actually similar. He comments, "We cut a scene of [roadie] Matt Brown's penis. It's a shot of him with his tiny-winy little wiener hanging out. I didn't want to publicly embarrass him for having such a small penis, so we trimmed the scene."

Doane, who wielded the editing knife, recalls some of the best cuts. "For example, there's

footage of Fletcher dismembering a police car," he begins. "Which we obviously couldn't show. There's a huge argument between Fletcher and Jimmie about Green Day. There's lots of violence from

concerts with fights and riots. We show some of the Hollywood theater riot (featured in the video), but there was a lot more we didn't put in, like guys on the ground unconscious getting their heads kicked in. There's also more vomiting, some of it self-induced, but I think we had enough vomiting already."

The violence footage is all

from the early days of Pennywise, so would-be concert-goers need not fear. However, there is one violent episode that's not so distant. Doane continues, "There was suppose to be a concert in Newport Beach [CA], but it got broken up because way too many tickets were sold. My crew and I went with Pennywise to this fancy hotel, and a fight broke out with Fletcher and this huge security guard. The guard was being a total dick and tried to throw out one of his friend's for no reason whatsoever. When Fletcher tried to help his friend, the guard got violent. It was an ugly sight. Fletcher ate him up, kicked his ass. We had that on tape, but we decided not to use it because the video was getting just too violent. I didn't want the video to be all about violence, because I don't want that to be people's perception of the band. Most everything they stand for is positive. It's just Fletcher's lunacy that makes people wonder."

—David Jensen

DIGGING DOANE

AT AGE TWENTY-THREE, Darren Doane has accomplished an incredible amount without even attending film school. He has done numerous music videos, two band documentaries, headed the film division at Malibu Comics, and is about to start production on his first feature film. Even more incredible is his creative beginning.

Doane recalls, "Right after graduating high school, my partner Ken Dauno and I sent out fake resumes to record labels saying we were UCLA grads and that we had started our own film and video production company. Low and behold, a management company called back and said they loved our resume and wanted us to be in New York in three days to do a video for Scatterbrain. After we finished, we just kept getting more work."

Eventually, Doane and Dauno found representation for making videos, but that proved a waste of time. Doane continues, "I got dicked over by a bunch of music video representation companies. They said they'd take my reel and shop it around, but they were full of shit. I realized the only person who will ever get you work as a filmmaker is yourself. If you put your career in the hands of other people, it will never go anywhere. So I took all the money I'd made in the last couple of years, and I started shooting a film I wrote called *Godmoney*. At the time it was only a forty page script, but I knew I could beef it up into a full feature."

"Before I started filming, though, I made a proposal to Malibu about starting a film division there. After about a week and a half of shooting, I was running out of money and Malibu called. They made an offer. I figured I'd go there and raise more money. I ended up staying at Malibu for sixteen months."

While at Malibu Comics, Doane shot a 30-minute TV pilot featuring a comic character called Firearm. The pilot was turned into a video which was sold directly to a comic book and sold in stores. Doane likewise did a 10-minute promo film for Hardcore (another comic line, excellently written by James Hudnall), starring kickboxing champion Gary Daniels. Doane was also

in charge of shooting all the commercials for marketing and promotion, which included three nationally-televized Ultraverse commercials. Though Doane enjoyed Malibu Comics, he never intended to stay that long. Change had to come soon.

Doane continues, "After sixteen months there, I really wanted to go do feature films. Plus, during my last six months, I was working on this Pennywise side project. Ken and I left and we decided to take some time off to focus on Pennywise. All the band members are great people, and I had total creative freedom, which is what every filmmaker dreams."

Furthermore, as a result of personal crisis, Doane was inclined to re-write *Godmoney*. He continues, "The film deals with the issue of suicide. During my last few months at Malibu, my life got turned upside down. One night I

got so depressed over certain personal issues that I seriously considered suicide. Being that low, I realized what it takes for a person to want to leave the planet. Here I am working on a script about suicide, and I'm in the situation myself. Having this new insight, it made me change *Godmoney* into something that would be more realistic and powerful. When I cleared my head and got my shit back together, I finally had an insight into suicide. So I spent the next seven months re-writing *Godmoney*."

Around the beginning of this year, Doane had finished the re-write of *Godmoney*. While I'd never read the original, the new script is an incredible look into the life of a person fighting against

despair and hopelessness—yet is slowly losing. Two major studios are already talking seriously with Doane about the film, with one of them talking about a multiple-picture deal.

Doane did find the time to do more videos and even another documentary. "Since then, I've done videos for Mike Knott [vocalist of Aunt Betty's Ford, the present writer's favorite band], Ten Foot Pole, and Sense Field. I also did a Strife Video documentary."

—David Jensen



"I thought it would take about two or three months, but we ended up working on the video for a year and a half. I got so deep into it that I couldn't get out."

though, are Fletcher's description and examples of "treatments." According to Fletcher, treatments are forms of punishment he does when people screw up. This punishment can include everything from Fletcher urinating and vomiting on a person to him dropping a live insect in someone's beer can. Of course, given the chance, Fletcher will give people treatments in advance.

Subsequently, a good amount of the psychotic footage wasn't actually filmed by Doane and company, but by the band itself. Jim, Fletcher and Byron all had video cameras. Jim actually has the least footage because, as he says, "I'm not dumb enough to take my camera on tour." Fletcher likewise has little footage, for he purchased his video camera just recently—though for a very specific purpose. Jim continues, "In Japan, Fletcher bought a \$350 BB gun and a portable camera—which he attached to it. He bought the camera so you could see the BBs flying out of the gun and the look of horror on the person's face at whom he's shooting. Anders, our roadie, came home with welts all over his body." Regretfully, Fletcher accidentally taped over the BB footage, which otherwise would be in the video. Jim adds, "He also taped over Anders getting peed on in the bathtub and being locked outside the hotel room naked for about half an hour."

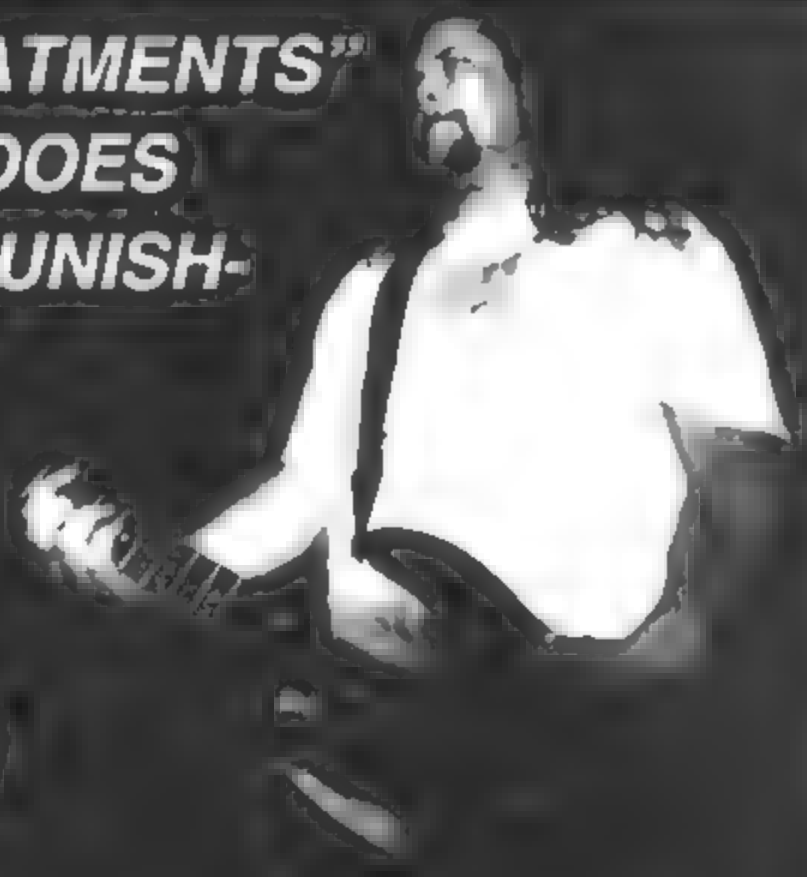
While Fletcher and Jim had relatively little material to contribute, Byron had eight full tapes to give Darren. Byron began filming the band about three years ago. Byron comments, "I just took my little Sony Hi-8 and filmed. Fletcher used my handheld camera during some of the treatments—filming and treating at the same time. We took my camera everywhere from day one. I didn't even take my case because I always had it with me—filming shit. Most everything that Doane didn't film, I did."

Besides filming Pennywise, Byron also built up a bootleg collection. He continues, "I generally couldn't film our shows because I was playing, but I often filmed the bands with which we played. I've taped The Offspring, Tool, Live, Ice-T, The Vandals, L7, Primus, Rancid, Strung Out, Sprung Monkey, Unwritten Law, and even a little Dance Hall Crashers—who are like my new favorite band."

An aspect of the video worth specific comment is the comic intro. Originally, the intro's black-and-white band footage was accompanied by the piano intro to the *Unknown Road* album. Doane explains, "We were doing the video entirely independent of the record label, but I did have a meeting early on with the owner, Brett Gurewitz, about releasing the project through Epitaph. We sat down and started watching a rough cut. When the opening came on, Brett yelled, 'Velveeta!!! That is so cheesy!' I said, 'It's not cheesy!'" Doane and Gurewitz would never see eye-to-eye on the intro.

But one day, another idea spontaneously manifest-

ACCORDING TO FLETCHER, "TREATMENTS" ARE FORMS OF PUNISHMENT HE DOES WHEN PEOPLE SCREW UP. THIS PUNISHMENT CAN INCLUDE EVERYTHING FROM FLETCHER URINATING AND VOMITING ON A PERSON TO HIM DROPPING A LIVE INSECT IN SOMEONE'S BEER CAN.



ed. Doane continues, "We were joking around during editing, and I started playing this cheesy soundtrack music. Daurio started singing vocals over the music comically describing each band member—Fletcher being abnormally huge, Jason being a couch potato, etc. We laughed so hard that we put this comic intro over the black-and-white images instead of the piano. When we showed it to the band, Jim laughed so hard he couldn't stop crying for five minutes. We knew then we were going to keep it. I love it because now we have an intro based on soundtrack music that most people would call cheesy and it's been turned into something very cool."

Also worthy of special note is the packaging. The box cover is designed like a Wheaties box with a cereal bowl filled with vomit and money. Ironically, this idea comes from a scene that was cut. Doane explains, "One night Fletcher threw up into a bowl and then tore up a bunch of hundred dollar bills and soaked them in the vomit. He let it sit there overnight, and the next morning, he took a spoon and ate all the crusty vomit with the money in it. The scene was just too much to stomach."

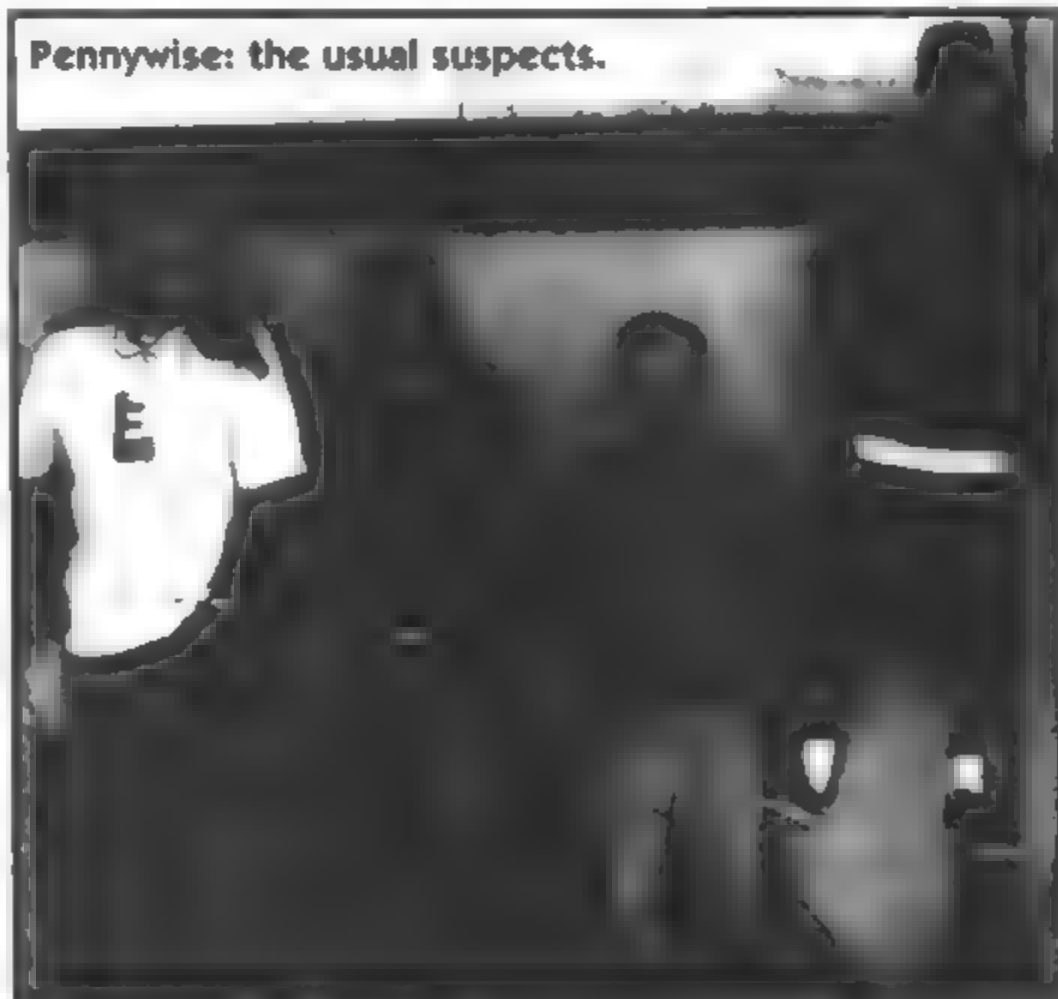
The back of the box, though, actually has childhood photos of all the band members. For Jim's photo, they utilized the marvel of computer graphics. He remarks, "When they scanned my picture in, they used the computer to shrink my head. Here's this kid with this small head, but not small enough that you realize anything was done to the photo. I look ridiculous."

Now that *Pennywise Home Movies* has been finished, Doane himself has been treated to one of Fletcher's personal entertainment whims. Doane recalls, "I've

gone two years working with Pennywise, and never once has Fletcher done a treatment to me. But just the other night, a bunch of us went to [Epitaph owner] Brett Gurewitz' huge birthday party, and we went to Denny's afterwards. It was Ken Daurio, Dan Snow, Fletcher, his girlfriend Carina, their roadie Anders, and myself. I went to the bathroom, and when I came back, there's all this ketchup on my seat. I looked over, and it was obviously Anders who did it. I wiped it up, smiled and sat down. Then I take a sip out of my milk, and I realize I'm sipping straight Tabasco sauce. Since Anders put the ketchup on my seat, I thought he did it, so I spit a full mouth of Tabasco sauce right into his face. He turned and pushed me, and we started facing off to fight. Then I hear Fletcher laughing, and realize Fletcher put the Tabasco sauce in the milk. So here I am in this bullshit confrontation with his roadie, and Fletcher—after all this time—had finally got me."

Yet Darren and Anders never came to blows because a cop came over to break it up, which sparked another confrontation. Doane continues, "The cop said, 'You better calm down right now, and you better stop throwing food!' Fletcher said, 'What do you mean? We can throw food if we want.' 'No you can't!' 'Yes I can.' 'No, I'm serious, don't throw food!' Then Fletcher asks, 'What if I want to?' The cop knew better and just sat back down, and by that time, Anders and I forget all about our stand-off." Nothing like a near-crisis to help people forget their differences. **ITV**

Pennywise: the usual suspects.



Pennywise Home Movies is available at your local record store

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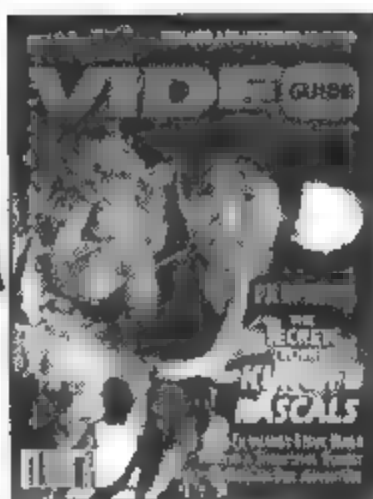
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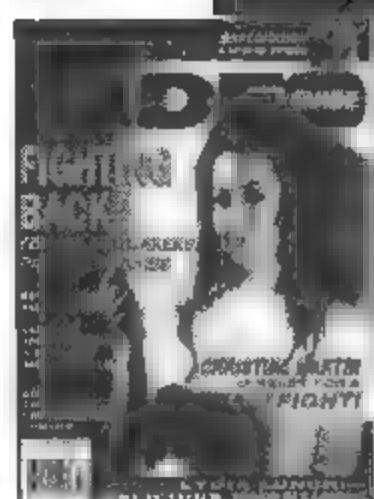
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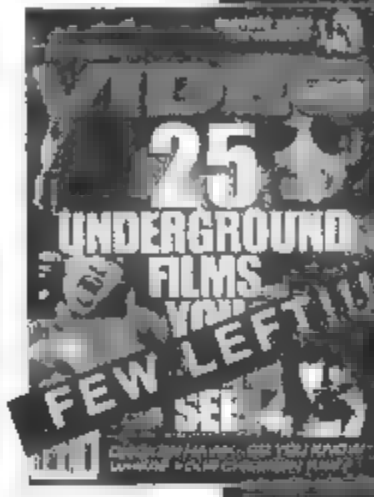
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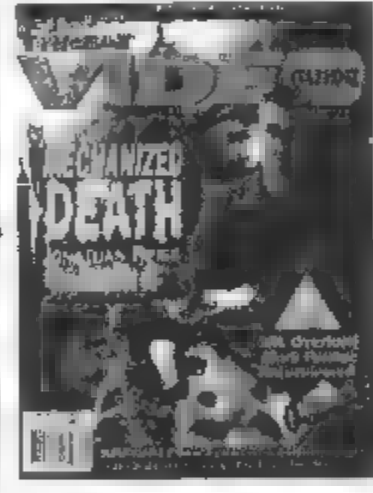
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☐ **FT18** Toronto Film
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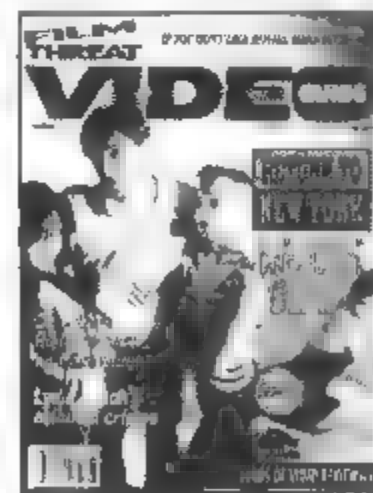
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Krod, Marilyn Manson



☐ **FT20** Todd Haynes, Kitten
Natividad, Lydia Lunch.



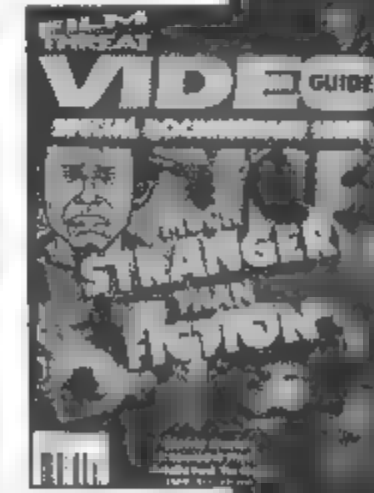
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On the road to ruin: Little did they know what lay just up ahead...

WRECKED ASPHALT REVISITED

by Ralph Coon

THE LAST PROM, OPTIONS TO LIVE, HIGHWAY OF AGONY—Take a runaway ride down memory lane with this complete guide to the horrific, yesteryear world of driver's training films.

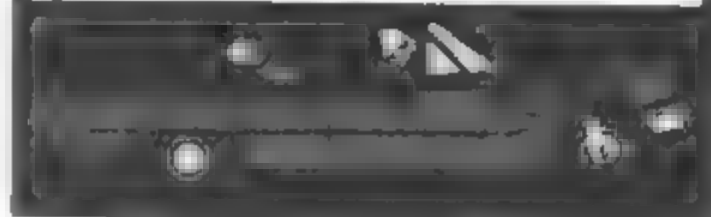
Ostensibly taught by professionals, drivers' education is often, especially in rural area school systems, instructed by gym teachers. During the winter months of their sophomore year, high school students are yanked off the playing fields and placed in darkened classrooms, watching with trepidation as a scratched and brittle 16mm film noisily travels through a projector—bringing to the screen a uniquely American learning tradition; the driver's education film.

With the exception of several paragraphs in Re/Search's essential book, *Incredibly Strange Films*, little if any-

"There is a deadly fascination about a wrecked car. Was it a pretty face that made this gaping, jagged hole in the windshield?"

—Grim narration from Gene McPherson's classic,
THE LAST PROM

thing has been written about these celluloid rites of passage. Perhaps because these films didn't travel through commercial channels of distribution and critique, they were largely ignored by "scholarly" studies of film and filmmakers. Today, however, most high-impact, blood and guts driver's ed films are considered archaic. Larger school systems no longer show harsh, reality films—opting instead for more innocuous fare. But there was a time when, if you learned to drive a car via public education, chances were you were subjected to some of the most grisly, bizarre films ever made.





The gaping hole left by a pretty face.

By all accounts, the first form of photographic driver's education teaching aids were black and white stills of car accidents displayed in county fair booths. In some cases, mangled cars involved in traffic fatalities were paraded in front of jovial carnival crowds like some Industrial Age freak show. The presentation of harsh reality in an entertainment setting proved ineffective.

Several years in the late 1940s to early 50s, driver's ed motion pictures began to appear. Films from this period were usually tame, B&W dramatizations running 20 to 30 minutes in length. *The Last Date* (1950), is an archetypical example as Jeanie, a beautiful young teenager, must choose between two boyfriends: Larry, who always drives courteously and observes the speed limit, or Nick (played by a young Dick York), who drives his "hot-rod" insanely fast. At a high-school dance, Jeanie ditches Larry and slips out unnoticed with Nick for a moonlit drive. As they speed along, a popular disc jockey on the radio urges teenagers not to commit "teenicide, the fine art of killing yourself with an

automobile before you turn 20." The words echo ominously in Jeanie's head as Nick barrels around a corner, smashing into an oncoming car. The film has no credits, listing only the production company, Wilding Picture Productions.

Educators were quick to realize the hokey acting in these early films would massively detract from the intended message. For the hard-to-reach student who routinely scorned authority, *The Last Date* was more than likely reduced to a laughable, high-camp good time, a *la Reefer Madness*.

Because of this, toward the end of the 50s, drivers' education pictures became rougher. Much rougher.

The 1958 Canadian film, *Safety or Slaughter*, was among the first to include authentic scenes of highway fatalities. "I'd like to show you a few statistics," comments the film's monotonic narrator. "That man is a statistic. So is that girl. These are real people, just like you and me." The intercut



Meeting the new boyfriend: How's his driving?



Prom night: Dinner, dancing and...

carnage is brief, but effective.

In the following year, Dick Wyman, a still photographer from Mansfield, Ohio, lost a friend to an automobile accident and decided to use his skills to help prevent further loss of life.

Purchasing primitive 16mm equipment, he began riding around in the back of ambulances working in and around the Mansfield area, photographing real auto accident victims in their tragic surroundings. Wyman named his first film after the Ohio State Highway Patrol official code for a fatal crash, *Signal 30*.

By the artist's own admission, *Signal 30* is "An ugly film. It is meant to be. It is designed to drive home to those who see it that an accident is not pretty."

Wyman offered the film to schools, civic groups and other like-minded parties. No one seemed interested. Undaunted, he persevered, making several other "crash" pictures. Still, no one showed interest and his films

sat on the shelf, unappreciated, unwatched, and gathering dust. The novice filmmaker was broke and looking for a way out. It looked as though Wyman's embryonic style of shock therapy-driver's training was terminal before it truly began.

However, in reality, the golden age of driver's education films was about to begin.

Wyman's accountant at the time, Earl J. Deems, made an offer to his employer to purchase the rights to *Signal 30*. However, since Wyman had yet to find a commercial use for his films, Deems needed a strategy to assure he would turn a profit. To lend more credibility to the films, he forged a symbiotic relationship with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. In return for

letting him use their official logo, and occasionally using real officers on screen, Deems gave the Ohio Highway Patrol, free of charge, complete access to his catalog of titles. He even made *A Great And Honorable Duty*, a complementary film highlighting the diverse challenges the Ohio Highway Patrol faces every day. Deems also saw and made use of the lucrative English-speaking overseas market, selling *Signal 30* and future efforts to military installations around the world.



...the bloody face of death.

Deems' ingenious ideas paid off, and in the early 60's he formed his own production company, Highway Safety Films, Inc. Over the next 14 years, Deems churned out 19 of the most hideously authentic crash films ever made, and in the process, became the world's preeminent *auteur* of driving education cinema.

Deems, 71, retired from filmmaking in the early 80's and still resides in Mansfield, Ohio, location of many of his magnum opuses. Even today, some 20 odd years since most of his films were completed, he still receives an occasional phone call from educators searching down him and his movies.

"I just got a call a couple of weeks ago from someone in Illinois looking for a copy of *The Third Killer*," says

Deems in a pleasantly husky voice. (The number one and two causes of death, according to Deems, are heart disease and cancer—the third being traffic accidents.) "People grew up watching my films and now some have become teachers and police officers who now want to show them to their students."

People did indeed grow up watching Deems' work. Three of his films, *Mechanized Death*, *Wheels of Tragedy*, and *Highways of Agony*, are among the most frequently remembered of all driver's ed titles.

"I made those films so long ago that it's hard to recall any specific stories about making them," Deems continues. "However, I do remember this, my cameraman use to ride with ambulances to crash sites and when the paramedics left with the victims, they'd be stuck. I'd have to make arrangements to have them picked up."

Often times, to help illustrate the high price of thoughtless motor-ing, Deems would invite victims to appear on camera. In his 1964 film, *The*

Unteachables, a young executive who lost a leg and arm in an accident lectures viewers on unsafe driving habits. This effective device was recycled in the 1983 film, *Kevin's Story*. Kevin Tunall, an 18 year old drunk driver convicted in the death of a young girl, was sentenced to spend two years speaking to youths, warning of carelessness with alcohol. Predominantly psychological in nature and free of twisted metal and torn flesh, *Kevin's Story* is a staple of most high school film libraries.

Deems declined to discuss the budgets of his films. He would say, however, that when actors were needed for films like *Wheels of Tragedy*, one of his few that relied on reenactments, he settled for amateur performers from

surrounding dinner theaters.

As he became more successful, Deems widened the breadth of his films to include such topics as bank robbery, shoplifting, child molestation and check forgery. In his 1964 bank job picture, *You and the Bank Robber*, Deems included footage of an actual hold-up as captured by ceiling security cameras, a then-innovative practice commonly used today by producers of such sensationalistic programs as *America's Most*

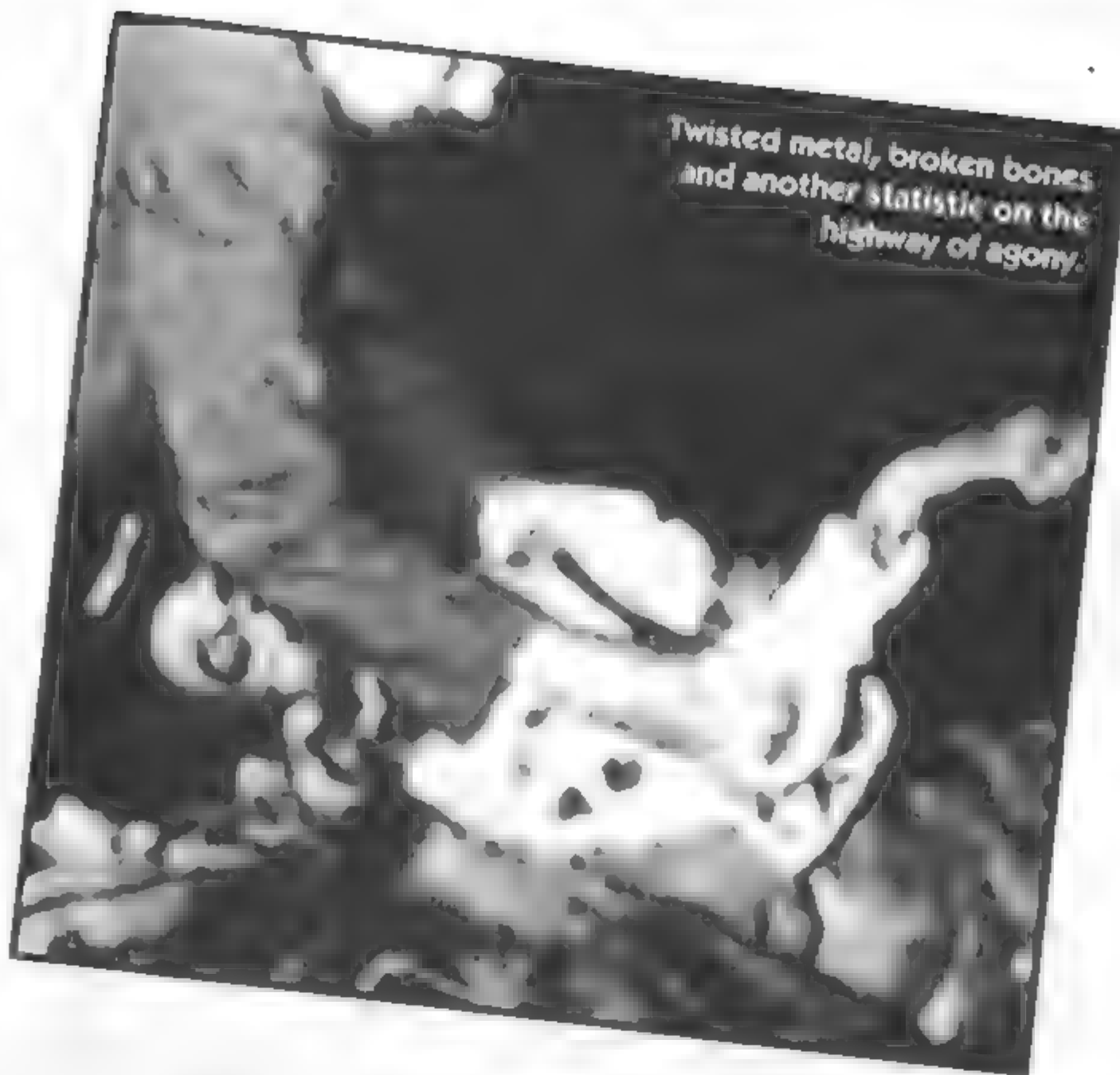
Wanted and *Rescue 911*. In *The Child Molester*, Deems, true to form, educates school children of the dangers of talking to strangers by employing authentic footage of police recovering the remains of two young girls murdered by a convicted molester.

Deems curtly disowns these films. "They were terrible, terrible—and I don't even have prints of them anymore." Unhappy with his temporary foray from the crash genre, he quickly returned.

Drive To Survive and *A Matter of Judgement* were among his next films. In them, he continued to include his idiomatic combination of gore and purple-prose narration. "This young teenager tried to outrun a train. Now he won't ever outrun anything again," pronounces an overbearing narrator while on-screen rescue workers pry a mutilated corpse from the aftermath of an automobile/locomotive collision.

Deems swears that few, if any, complained of his macabre teaching tactics. "Most people I heard from told me, 'Way to go!'"

However, Deems is quick to point out he knew where to draw the line. "I left some footage out. There was no reason to show a decapitation. What



countless highway traffic accidents, telling you and showing you like it really is. We've included some of the most shocking scenes ever put on motion picture film. We have shown you the injured, the dying, and the dead. Do you remember this?" The film cuts to images of a truck driver impaled against his steering wheel, expired drivers curled up on asphalt—catapulted hundreds of feet from their vehicles—accident scenes where it is

impossible to distinguish car from driver.

"Now I'll bet you remember us," the narrator concludes triumphantly.

Without a doubt, *Options to Live* is the cataclysmic apex of this genre, for in it, Deems utilizes a new technique, one that could shock even the most hardened of viewers; the actual sounds of an automobile accident.

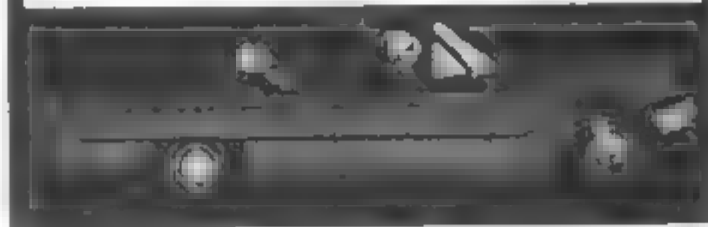
Moans of the dying drowned out by the shriek of sirens dot the film's soundtrack. "My legs, my legs!" one woman screams after noticing her nearly severed limbs lying next to her.

With the marriage of sound and visual, Deems may have very well taken his brand of shock therapy over the top. Soon after the release of *Options to Live*, Highway Safety Films, Inc.'s activities mysteriously ceased. Rumors circulated that the company was forced out of business due to legal complications from auto accident victims appearing in Deems' films who were seeking a cut of the profits.

The truth was that in 1980-81 Deems shot footage for one final film, tentatively titled, *Strategies For Safe Driving*. While editing the picture in 1983, his wife, long struggling against

"They were terrible, terrible—and I don't even have prints of them anymore."

—Earl J. Deems curtly disowning his own films.



would the point of that be? In those cases I just lingered on the mangled automobile."

In 1979, Deems completed his last film, *Options to Live*, an obvious swan song, reaffirming his legacy as one of the founders of realism-based driver's education films. "We're Highway Safety Films, Inc.," a narrator seated in an editing room informs us. "Since 1959 we've taken you to the scenes of

cancer, suddenly passed away. Deems shelved *Strategies For Safe Driving*, deciding to retire.

"I always felt we were doing a big service," says Deems, musing about his involvement with filmmaking. "There certainly was a big demand for those sorts of films."

Sadly, Deems may be the sole curator of his films. Having found their vernacular and/or teaching value sorely dated, most school systems and police departments have removed Deems' films from their catalogs. Even the National Safety Council, a non-profit organization designed to promote and distribute instructional safety films, has categorized Deems' films as "dead storage," packing them away in basements and storage areas across the country—more than likely never to see the light of a projector bulb again. Videophiles have long been circulating

to music, was among their first works. However, so strong was the demand for Deems' old films that a series of remakes were planned. According to a source within the department (who declined to be identified), a sequel to *Signal 30* was shot several years ago but never completed as a new regime took over and dismissed the project—opting instead to make a *Batman* parody entitled *Buckleman*. Buckleman drives around in his bucklemobile and shoots people not wearing safety belts with his bucklegun, immediately strapping them in.

Unlike the Ohio Highway Patrol, few state police departments possess the available funding to produce their own educational films. Most rely on slide presentations featuring local traffic accidents. Nonetheless, there are exceptions. The California Highway Patrol has been producing films since

finding the footage," added Milton, now with the National Highway and Traffic Administration. "That's why it took so long. Most of the time they'd get there late and the victims would be gone. How many films can you make about two wrecked cars?"

The film's apt title was derived from the opening scene revealing a corpse laying next to a battered car, his blood trickling down the blacktop roadway. After that initial opening, no other highway death is depicted, for like Deems' *The Unteachables*, *Red Asphalt* focuses on the consequences of an automobile accidents. Maimed and mutilated crash victims are shown carted into ambulances, their lives forever changed. The film proved such a success that two sequels were made, *Red Asphalt II* and *Red Asphalt III*. According to Steve Kohler, Executive Producer of *Red Asphalt III*, the

"An ugly film. It is meant to be. It is designed to drive home to those who see it that an accident is not pretty."

—Dick Wyman on his pioneering effort *SIGNAL 30*



copies of Deems' more notorious films amongst themselves. This is of little consolation considering most are poorly dubbed, 8th and 9th generation copies and are, for the most part, unwatchable.

Once Deems retired from filmmaking, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, now without its supplier of films, created an internal media division to produce and direct their own films. *End Result*, a collage of fatal accidents set

the late 60s. Their first production, *Red Asphalt*, is perhaps the most infamous of all driving education films.

Started in 1965 and finished four years later, *Red Asphalt* was photographed by a now-defunct professional camera club from Hollywood, California, according to the film's producer, Kemp Milton. "The California Highway Patrol paid for film and developing and volunteers from the camera club would be responsible for

California Highway Patrol plans to make a new *Red Asphalt* film every ten years.

Because most blood 'n guts realism driver's ed films were nothing more than a compilation of highway accidents, little if any understanding of filmic techniques were needed to make them. Simply point and shoot. Dramatized efforts were the arena for displaying cinematic vision, and, sadly, few lived up to the challenge. A note-

worthy exception was *The Last Prom*, produced and directed by Gene McPherson.

Prom opens with a shot of a demolished car resting in front of a small town high school. "There is a deadly fascination about a wrecked car," the narrator tells us as the camera cuts to the car's blood smeared windshield. "Was it a pretty face that made this gaping, jagged hole in the windshield?" The film dissolves into a flashback, telling the story of Bill Donovan, a "good boy, but a bad driver," who attends his high school prom with friend, Sandy Clark. Following the motif of most "date driver's ed pictures, Bill and Sandy, along with two friends, leave the dance early to go for an innocent drive. Speeding carelessly along, Bill plows into a tree, hurling Sandy through the windshield, killing her.

Using hand held camera and washed-out, single source cinematography, McPherson twists his obvious budgetary inadequacies to his advantage, creating a pseudo-documentary that chillingly makes its point without ever once exploiting a real life tragedy.

Originally shot in black and white in 1963, *The Last Prom* was remade in color in 1968 and then again in 1980. All three versions were produced and directed by McPherson from his own script, with only the 1980 version differing by having the teenagers driving a van and drinking alcohol. Of the three, the first remake remains McPherson's favorite. "When we made the third version the budget was considerably higher and a much larger crew participated," McPherson said. "The last version somehow lacked the impact of the earlier versions which were simply made by a news team trying to stretch their film hori-



Stem words of warning in *OPTIONS TO LIVE*.

zons a little beyond routine day to day coverage."

McPherson, then Vice President of News and Special Projects for a small group of Ohio TV stations, made the 1968 version of *The Last Prom* for \$5,000 with a skeleton crew consisting of his news staff cameraman, sound man and film editor. He also enlisted the choir department of a local high school to help write and perform the film's creepy *a cappella* score. The final result is a stunning, highly effective film, as eerie as any good low budget hor-

ror film, and should be considered required viewing by aficionados of the genre.

With the exception of Earl J. Deems' pictures, most driver's education films lie in public domain—antiquated strips of celluloid all but forgotten. Surely there must be a suitable protege lurking out there somewhere who can appreciate the commercial possibilities in finding and resurrecting these gems of nostalgia.

With the videocassette reissue of the "drug menace" films of the 30s, pictures like *Reefer Madness*, *The Devil's Weed*, and *Cocaine Fiends* have become cult favorites of alternative video stores. Likewise, recent theatrical releases like *Atomic Cafe*, *Radio Bikini*, and *Heavy Petting*, have rekindled interest in 1950s era propaganda and educational films. Could a film juxtaposing the crimson imagery of *Red Asphalt* with the sheer corniness of *The Last Prom* be far off?

Is the world ready? **[TM]**

First and last-time FTVG writer Ralph Coon is also the editor of *The Last Prom*, an exhaustive 'zine that investigates the world of modern esoterica. Recent issues include UFO phenomena and defensive tel-evangelist Dr. Gene Scott. Both are available for \$4.50ppd from 137 Fernando Blvd., #243, Burbank, CA 91402

"Since 1959 we've taken you to the scenes of countless highway traffic accidents, telling you and showing you like it really is. We've included some of the most shocking scenes ever put on motion picture film."

—Narration from *Deems'*
OPTIONS TO LIVE



BUTTGEREIT RETURNS WITH A SICK NEW HORROR TALE

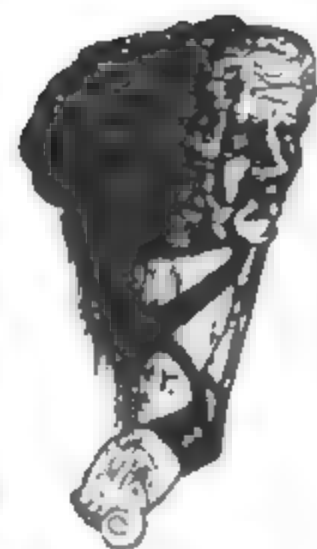
The director cozies up with his latest celluloid abomination, the serial killer Schramm (as played by Florian Köner von Gustorf)

Photo: Mächa Brandel



After setting a new standard with his indie horror efforts *NEKROMANTIK*, *THE DEATHKING* and *NEKROMANTIK2*, Jörg Buttgereit tried something different—which has been hailed as a breakthrough. This set report generated a flurry of letters asking when his latest would arrive Stateside.

SCHRAMM! INTO THE MIND OF A SERIAL KILLER



by David Kerekes

To those familiar with director JÖRG BUTTGEREIT, it's no surprise that his new film again focuses on death, dismemberment, sex and all things macabre. But does the world need another serial killer film? Probably not, but then again, Buttgereit isn't just another director—and this film's murderer has an entirely different perspective.

SCHRAMME WITH AN 'E' means "scratch." Without the 'e,' Schramm is the eponymous serial killer subject of Jörg Buttgereit's new feature. Filming has been delayed because Manfred Jelinski—producer and general Mr Fixit—has lost the use of his right arm after snapping a tendon moving a gravestone. Manfred's ailing limb reminds Jörg of the stomach ulcer *Nekromantik 2* gave him, which inspires the director to take it easy so *Schramm* doesn't give him another one. He pops pills, swallows rancid herbal tea and uses a special, more natural sugar. Several spoonfuls and it still doesn't taste sweet. On the set, Jörg constantly jokes, "I can't work under such conditions." After a while, it doesn't sound like he's joking anymore.

KILLER EXPERIENCES

The movie opens with taxi driver and serial killer Lothar Schramm, (played by a stocky Florian Körner von Gustorf) lying in a pool of whitewash, motionless except for the trail of blood running from his nose. It is apparent he has fallen from a pair of stepladders while trying to paint over bloodstains

on the walls of his apartment. Dying, he thinks back to how he had loved his mother and all those innocent girls he killed. He imagines his right leg is missing and the genitals of his victims snap at his dick, trying to bite it off. Within the hallucination, he encounters a vagina monster—just one of the phantasmagoric manifestations that haunt him and the audience throughout the film. You see, the world of *Schramm* is seen entirely through the killer's fevered eyes.

Although the first scene is Schramm's ignominious death, the film is about how he lived. In flashbacks, he murders two Jehovah Witnesses who knock at his door. Not having the will-power to turn them away, he lets them in. They chat. He bludgeons them to death, strips them naked and puts their bodies into positions he imagines would be frowned upon in the face of their Lord. He likes to think they died virgins, but then has sex with their dead bodies.

Monika is a call-girl and Schramm's next door neighbor. Occasionally he listens through the wall to her entertaining customers. Sometimes, as he listens, he fucks a blow-up torso.



Left: Schramm (von Gustorf) graphically indulges his sexual fantasies involving his prostitute neighbor, Monika (played by Monika M.). **Above:** (L to R) Producer Manfred Jelinski and director Buttgerieit take a moment to schramme chins during their first editing session on the new film.

One day, Monika asks Schramm to drive her to a rich client's house. He does so and a bond forms between the two. She wants Schramm to wait for her as it's her first job "away from home" and she's a little nervous. In a way, he falls in love with her.

A constant anathema in Schramm's life is his right leg which, he imagines, has turned rotten and dropped off. He believes the leg on which he walks is false and ill-fitting. It causes him to lose balance, as in the opening sequence when he topples from the stepladder to his lonely death.

Immobile in whitewash, he dies, and Lothar Schramm stands before the gates of heaven about to meet his maker.

EAST GERMAN ESCAPADES

For the final day of shooting, the crew make their way into the town of Pankow (in former East Germany) to a house once belonging to a since deposed government official. Franz, Eddy the German, Monika, Marianne, Jörg and I ride together. Manfred and Clemens, the soundman, follow in the truck. Someone makes a crack about knowing you've crossed the old border dividing Berlin when the road switches to cobblestone. I laugh—until the car begins to bounce violently several minutes into the journey. We've crossed the divide.

Arriving in Pankow, we slip onto side roads. Moving away from traffic,

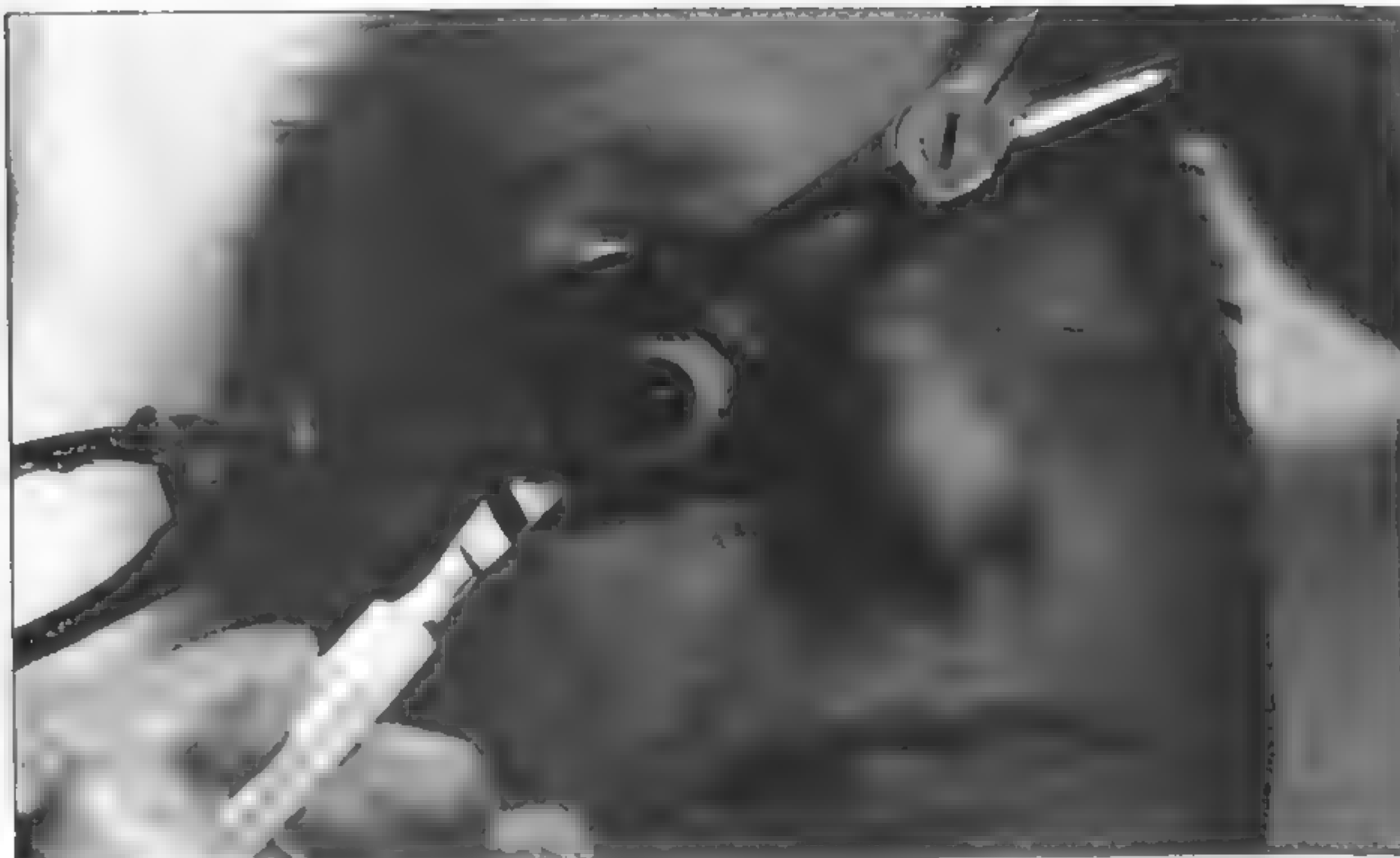
we come to a great house, set just off a picture-postcard lane where children play and machinery bellows smoke in the distance. Chestnut trees surround the house and the slightest breeze causes fruit the size of tennis balls to pummel the car, the pavement, the route to the door of the house. We initiate a relay-race to get the equipment out of the truck, trying to negotiate the breeze and determine the best moment to make a break for it.

The house itself is three stories high and not at all furnished in the Traubant-esque manner expected of a Communist Eastern Bloc dwelling. Instead, it is oppressively lavish and ornate, decadent down to the barroom relief wallpaper. Clemens has somehow managed to procure the property for today's shoot. But, there is no running water. So, the swimming pool is empty and the toilet doesn't flush. It also stinks a little. On the ground floor, there is a huge conference room with a grand oak table. This is where we'll tie up Monika. Upstairs we discover the perfect place for Eddy to meet his whore—a bedroom bedecked in expensive trinkets and equally expensive ugly paintings.

Eddy's only comment: "I'm hungry."

MONIKA BOUND

Every so often during filming, Monika (played by Monika M., of *Nekromantik 2* infamy) squeals as the



Schramm literally takes it in the eye Clockwork Orange style during one of his many horrific hallucinations. Makeup effects were handled by Michael Romahn

rope burns her wrists or the back of her legs. Crew members offer assistance in tying the knots, but longtime Buttgereit cowriter Franz Rodenkirchen does most of the binding. Jörg takes a snapshot with his still camera, singing almost inaudibly, "Girls just want to have fun."

Half an hour later, the last knot is secured. Franz ponders his work, adjusting the binds here and there. At the far end of the room, the camera stands ready, mounted on its wheelbase. Jörg lines up the shot and someone throws a dog leash at Monika's feet. "Okay ... ACTION." The camera sweeps steadily across the floor, traverses the length of the room toward the hapless victim as she struggles against her bonds, finally coming to rest inches from her gagged mouth. Crew members applaud, wheel the camera back for another take, and run through the sequence again. They decide on a third take for good luck.

Monika bound, gagged and adorned in a Nazi boy's brigade uniform, is to be seen in *Schramm's* final sequence. She is the last thing Lothar Schramm will dream of before dying. He fantasizes about the girl to no end. But he fantasizes about everything.

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THE MYSTERIOUS JOSEF K.

While in Germany, I reside at the address of 'Josef K.'—a pseudonymous cover for a vacant apartment. Police raids on the Buttgereit home, his workplace and the homes of his friends and associates, have deemed it necessary to create this neutral ground to safely hide his officially "banned" movies *Nekromantik* and *Nekromantik 2*. This is where the master prints are hidden. It's Josef K.'s name on the mailbox, Josef K.'s name on the bank account, and Josef K. who pays the rent every month. "He really does exist," says Manfred, "on paper."

Before I moved in, the Josef K. apartment was host to several of *Schramm's* bedroom scenes. No one can explain why unwashed dishes and cups of cold black coffee clutter the kitchen, or why several bags of overly ripened prunes lay on the table. There is a stove and crates of emptied beer bottles in the corner. The pantry is bare.

Upon leaving the kitchen, one comes across the bathroom. Opposite this, a storage cupboard houses folded bed sheets and a bloody leg stump, shorn just above the knee.

Moving along there is a bedroom—my room. On the ancient wrought iron



ABOVE: Monika (Monika M.) displays some of coscriptor Franz Rodenkirchen's knotwork. BELOW: Schramm fantasizes about his detachable appendage.



framework bed, I sleep in an S-shape to avoid the mattress holes cut out for some horrific visual effects trickery. The extracted pieces of foam lie on the floor at the back of the room. In vain, I try to replace them. Dry blood trails from stains in the sheets to the bathroom, over the mirror, to the tub. A pair of handcuffs hanging from the bed frame prompts me to put my feet at the head of the bed so I might sleep without the grate of metal-on-metal in my ear. Copies of *Awake!* and *The Watchtower*, circa 1969, lay hidden under the bed accompanied by *Tortured Love*, a pulp novel with a bosom-heavy brunette pouting lasciviously from the cover. A TV set stands to my left with a video recorder beneath it. Neither machine works. The sleeve of an empty video case extols fashionable ladies' underwear for the older woman. Upon a wooden chair stands an empty wine glass, an empty bottle of Skull beer, a water pitcher and one inflatable love doll.

"Take My Body" it says on the doll's box. I pull open the flap located next to the announcement "Great new aids for loving." A ripe orange nipple greets me. I coax the lifeless balloon out of its packaging and proceed to blow on its valve.

The model lounging on the box is beautiful. The enclosed Ms. Take My Body, on the other hand, when fully inflated, has no head, no limbs, is a gaudy pink (and orange) and has discolored acrylic pubes. Indeed, she is all torso. Not only that, but where the neck stops (and where one would expect to find a head) is an inscription: PRESS HERE AND FIND A WONDERFUL FEELING AT THE BOTTOM. Pressing, as directed, the torso's "hole" throbs menacingly. I imagine the "wonderful feeling" takes a little getting used to.

The image of *Schramm's* vagina monster with its snapping teeth springs to mind and I fold Take My Body back into her box.

RELAXING BETWEEN TAKES

Monika has a throat infection and keeps a scarf around her neck when not filming. She sips from a bottle of Skull Beer and lights a cigarette. Copies of *Solaris* and *Enter the Dragon* need returning to the Videodrom store on her way home. Based on her choice of movies and interest in football, Florian tells the rest of the crew that Monika is a man.

He calls Franz an East German and Monika a man.

"He did? That's not true!" Monika confirms.

Ever joking, the bare-chested Florian leaps to his feet with the cry "AMERICAN NINJA!" before assuming the stance of an ultimate warrior—legs spread slightly apart, poised ready to pounce, fists curled ready to strike. This goes on almost every day, Florian's belly hanging over his trousers—if he wears trousers at all. Sometimes he seems to be re-enacting the opening scene of *Apocalypse Now*, karate-chopping the air like a demented Captain Willard. Resembling a slightly underweight Nicholas Worth in *Don't Answer the Phone*, he turns to Jörg and, for no discernible reason, calls him a "fag pervert."




Who says Jehovah's Witness's can't have fun? *SCHRAMM* proves otherwise.

"One thing I told myself after my ulcer with *Nekromantik 2*," says Jorg, "is you have to have fun. I don't want to have a bad time. I thought Florian would be fun to have on the set."

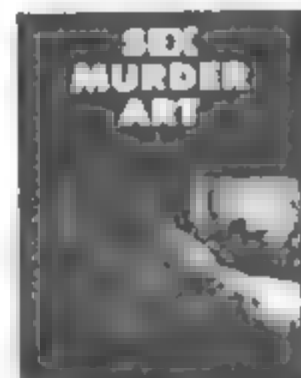
But Florian's lyrical tone and jovial manner are offset by his demanding,

often threatening presence once the camera begins to roll. Then the fooling around stops.

"If I can get someone who *looks like* the part they are to play, that's half the battle," Jorg says, apparently satisfied with his casting for *Schramm*. 

FOR MORE ON BUTTGEREIT

THE PRECEDING story was in fact a (heavily edited and somewhat butchered) excerpt from writer David Kerekes' *Sex Murder Art*—a somewhat stalker-like tome that meticulously chronicles Buttgerit's career through his humble Super 8 beginnings to the production of his latest effort 16mm-to-35mm feature, *Schramm*. Filled with nifty photos and sporting a gruesome cover your mom won't approve of, this makes the perfect gift for anyone who's already overloaded on the director's death-heavy gore-fests—yet still craves more. And as a primer to no-budget filmmaking, it's an inspirational must-have for the beginning sleaze auteur.



Fans of the Buttgerit documentary *Corpse Fucking Art* also have Kerekes to thank for the interviews that are heard on that video—and if you liked that...

Contact the author at his fine sub-culture publication *Headpress*, PO Box 160, Stockport, Cheshire, SK1 4ET Great Britain. He is also the co-author of the essential snuff-film investigation *Killing For Culture*. Go for it.



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PUNK'S



Never mind the Sex Pistols, here's Sonic Youth and Nirvana on the road in David Markey's Super 8 riot 1991: The Year Punk Broke.

BIG

DEBATE

BY GABRIEL ALVAREZ

"WHEN YOUTH
CULTURE BECOMES
MONOPOLIZED BY
BIG BUSINESS,
WHAT ARE THE
YOUTH TO DO?"

• THURSTON MOORE •
OF SONIC YOUTH

NINETEEN-NINETY-TWO may have been the year you finally got sick of mainstream press giving alternative music a handjob, but back in 1991 this "overnight" phenomenon was still the "next big thing." Leave it to Sonic Youth, the mother lode of today's independent music scene—a band that has mutilated every fringe genre from punk to kitschy pop into progressive and influential melodic output for more than a decade—to put everything into perspective. As made by filmmaker David Markey (director of the 1984, no-frills, rock biz spoof *Desperate Teenage Lovedolls* and its technically superior, if not more out-of-whack, sequel *Lovedolls Superstar*), 1991: *The Year Punk Broke* is not only a feature-length rockumentary of Sonic Youth's European tour with Seattle-based megastars Nirvana, but a soothingly noisy time-capsule that proves corporate America can only buy into cutting-edge hipness—not be a part of it.

Shot entirely by Markey in the subdued grandeur that is Super 8, 1991 relishes in jokey montages that the hard

fans will eat up and unleashes an 18-song arsenal of smoking sets from not only the aforementioned bands, but from such acts as Dinosaur Jr., Babes in Toyland, Gumball and, yes, The Ramones.

"I got a call a week before the tour started which was in August of '91," explains Markey, sitting in his minimal, yet accommodating Los Angeles apartment. As he tells it, Thurston Moore, one of the founding members of Sonic Youth, asked the 29-year-old ex-musician (member of Painted Willie, Sin 34 and Anarchy Six) if he wanted to document the two-week tour just for fun. "It was, 'Just come along, shoot some stuff and see what happens,'" he recalls. "I didn't even have a passport at the time and I had to scramble to get my shit together. I bought like 2,000 rolls of Super 8 film and stuffed everything into a large suitcase."

The resulting footage from the two-week stint prompted the David Geffen Company (DGC, the major label that signed Sonic Youth in 1990) to blow up 1991 to 16mm and give it a midnight screening theatrical release across the country (the original plans for a 35mm upgrade were scrapped according to Markey). "It's pretty great because the whole thing was done in Super 8, with really no budget and no aspirations for anything at all," says the director. "It was just like a very large home movie."

What strikes you first about 1991 is just that, the surreal feeling of actually being there, as if you were walking around equipped with an all-access



Lee Ranaldo (left) of Sonic Youth warns Markey to keep an eye out for unexpected 1991 co-stars from MTV.

backstage pass. "For me, this film was a departure because I really used a lot of *cinema verité*. Just letting what's happening take over," says Markey.

Throughout 1991, the viewer is privy to wild behavior as bands indulge in the stereotypical wanton atmosphere associated with rock music. Off-stage, members abuse the catering, strike up deep conversations with perplexed locals and basically fuck around. (In one scene, Sonic Youth bassist Kim Gordon mockingly chastises aloud, "I was promised there would be no fat Industry people sitting in the front.") The let-it-roll technique aside, Markey agrees that the loaded camera can egg on such tomfoolery. Sure, you bring a camera into a room with a bunch of slightly drunk guys and they're gonna be clowny for you." But as he notes, "Another great thing about the Super 8 camera is that it's portable, small and less obtrusive than a larger camera. People weren't as intimidated because I didn't have a large film crew with me. I was able to really capture the close feel." Yet, not all you see is spontaneous. There were certain scenes that I set

up," reveals Markey. "But while editing I thought all the stuff that I set up looked real and all the stuff that was real looked fake."

Clearly, however, the performances onstage are genuinely explosive, guaranteed to satisfy those starved for non-lip-synching musical renditions. Nirvana's plow through "School," in which frontman Kurt Cobain rams his head repeatedly into the nearest amp, or the 100% female Babes in Toyland's expulsion of their vicious "Dustcake Boy," (a song that threatens to rupture the collective ears of The Go-Gos, The Bangles and maybe even L7) are highlighted by haphazard angles. This is no small task considering it was "a one-man show," according to Markey, who shot footage daily. Asked how he decid-

ed what to zero in on during the heat and flash of a live show, the solo shooter answers: "It's like being in there in the moment, zen-like. Just letting what's happening dictate the direction."

Sporadically interspersed with the often audience-level view of the stage are scenes of Sonic Youth visiting the sights of that particular city stop, whether it be amusement parks or the nearest used record store. The project's scope would on the surface seem exhausting. Not so, says its helmer. "Making this film wasn't work at all. It was just a lot of fun."

Perhaps that's why 1991 embodies a familiarity with all the groups involved. "I think it's a film for fans," says Markey. "It's very much on the inside. It takes the slice-of-life approach and let's the reality of a two-week tour be itself without any sort of narrative." In keeping in line with this approach, the movie doesn't announce what particular group is on camera. In fact, the only times you see the names of bands—besides the credits—are on posters, fliers, T-shirts and, in one amusing

shot, placards sitting atop rather elegant-looking dinner tables. "I was considering putting the band's name and their song title on the screen at the intro to each song. But I wanted to make people work a little," laughs the filmmaker. "Some critics have really larkened on that. And I understand it. It was a challenging thing to do." Still, Markey points to past cinematic efforts in justifying his move. "If you look at *Monterrey Pop* I don't think they had the bands' names or song titles on it," he says. Another complaint has been that of re-hashing the concert film genre, a criticism he expected. "A lot of the critics are immediately taken to, 'Oh, it's the '60s film reconstructed.' It may look like that to them just because there's festivals and lots of people."

Just the same, did Markey screen any rock movies before shooting? "Just films in my memory from my childhood," he says. *"The Kids Are Alright, The Song Remains the Same, Pink Floyd at Pompeii* is one of my favorites. Then, of course, *The Punk Rock Movie, D.O.A., The Decline of the Western Civilization*. These were all films I was definitely influenced by

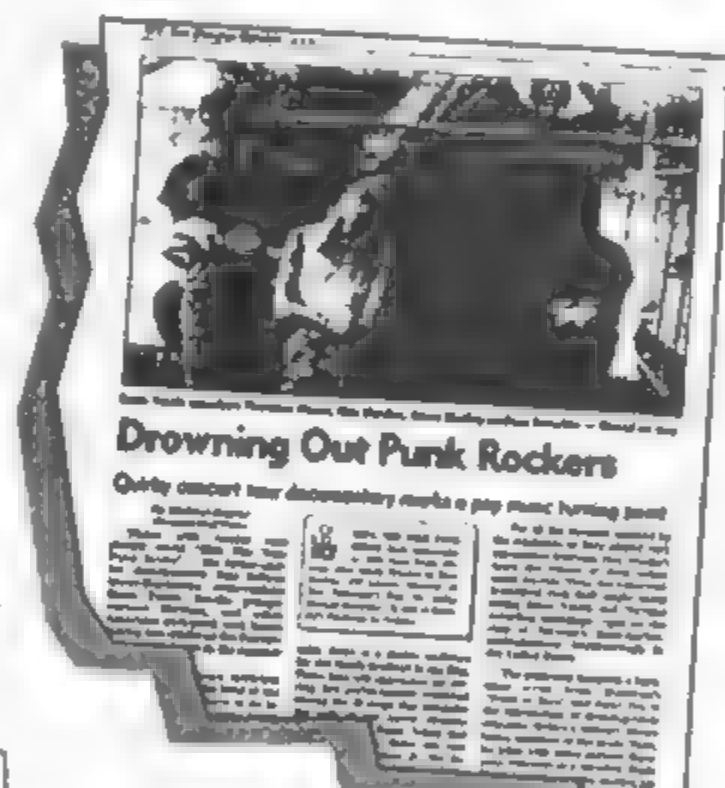
Markey first met Sonic Youth years ago at a Black Flag show. He eventually

had Moore contribute a song to *Lovedolls Superstar*. And whenever they met up, the friends would make "really ridiculous Super 8 shorts," the first of which was a parody. "We saw this James Woods film, *The Boost*, which was really terrible," Markey remembers. "We religiously got into it and made our own version of it. James Woods is major inspiration," Markey laughs. He later directed the clips for "Mildred Pierce" (starring friend and former Redd Kross groupie Sofia Coppola) and "Cinderella's Big Score" on Sonic's *Gun* home music video. Another teaming resulted in *Rap Damage*, where the duo tried to peg the hip hop culture. "Actually, some of *Rap Damage's* attitude found its way into 1991," says Markey. Indeed, during some pre-concert shenanigans, Ice T's gangsta lyrics are heard mimicked.

Moore inadvertently becomes the narrator of *1991* each time he engages in one of his many indecipherable outbursts. One can't even begin to translate the meaning of such rants as "a dance, a fucky-wucky dance" or "everybody, you're not just a duck, you're a human!" Markey ponders, "It's stream of unconsciousness, psycho-babble. We were trying to do poetry. I'm

sure someone will sit down someday with the videotape and transcribe all of it and put it on a T-shirt."

Coincidentally, with the long-standing practice of fans manufacturing illicit band paraphernalia, Markey, who himself once worked on the fanzine *We Got Power* ("the *National Lampoon* of hardcore magazines"), wasn't surprised to discover bootlegs of his barely finished feature. "A few weeks after we completed one of the final cuts there was a bootleg version of the very first rough on-line for sale on the street." Perhaps because he grew up making his own movies and music, the illegal dupes didn't faze the director. "It just depends on whose hands it falls into. Inherently, bootlegging has always been around. I think The Beatles did a lot of

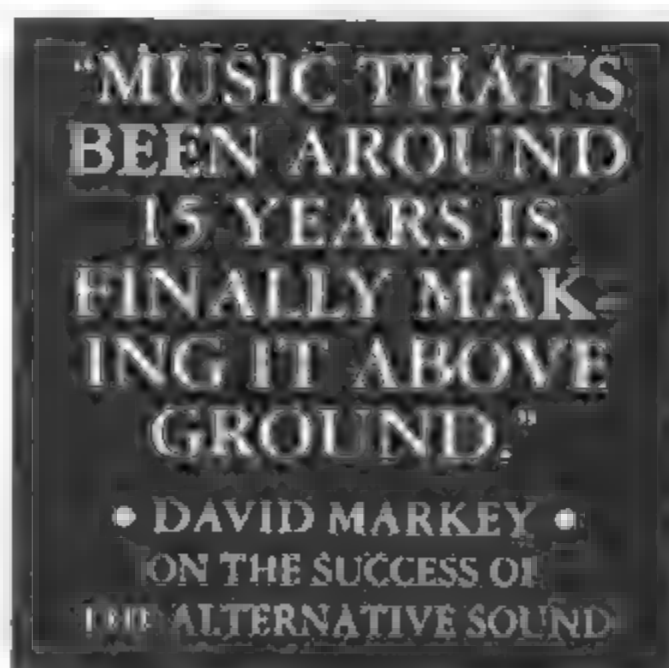


Pleased to meet me: Sonic Youth is Lee Ranaldo, Kim Gordon, Thurston Moore and Steve Shelley.

their own official bootlegs. And Sonic Youth do their own bootlegs, too. It's just a part of rock 'n roll."

In many respects, the Super 8 format not only fits this do-it-yourself philosophy, but the alternative sound itself. "A lot of the graininess and weirdness that sometimes Super 8 can yield really seems to work well with this music," says Markey. And in a profession that prides itself in touring in vans when first starting out, the cost of the format also comes into significance. "Super 8 allowed me to work relatively inexpensively and shoot eight hours of film for reasonable amounts of money, which Sonic Youth initially put up. By the time we got through the end it was a bit more than six grand for film, processing and the video transfer. Sonic Youth was not gonna sit around and wait for the big machine," says Markey, in reference to Sonic's corporate backers at Geffen.

Which incidentally brings us to the role MTV plays in *1991*. For the most part, this movie is conspicuously free of the 24-hour music channel's slick-look. The director doesn't entirely concur, however: "I think that there's a certain MTV influence in it. If you compare the film to your average '70s concert film, this has much faster cuts, and in that regard, I think that's more reflective of this era. Television commercials are all fast cuts. That's all inspired by MTV. Shortening the attention span of the American down to 1.375 sound bites is pretty much where culture is at." And, as if to prove white male corporate media's dominating hold of popular



opinion, the host of MTV's *120 Minutes* (the network's "alternative music" show), Dave Kendall, appears in the movie interviewing Sonic Youth. "It's original intent was to be as far away from MTV as possible," admits Markey. "The MTV segment is one of the many ironic things in the film."

1991 revelation: Thurston thirstin' for more records.

And, irony is most evident in *1991*'s title. Markey remembers coming up with the moniker while sitting around the motel staying off jet-lag and watching Euro-MTV. "They had this segment on Mötley Crüe that showed them performing 'Anarchy in the U.K.' in this big European festival. And we were just taken back," he says. "I just kind of coined the phrase, 'Wow, 1991 is the year punk broke.' Which of course became prophetic when two months later Nirvana hit the world as hard as they did." Markey has plenty of other evidence to support his claims. "Guns 'N Roses are doing their punk rock record. The other day I heard Skid Row covering the Ramones on the radio. It's a point in time when music that's been around 15 years plus is finally making it to above ground places in a

really large, surreal sense."

Along with that, there develops a stand against such mass exposure. "This kind of music is something Sonic Youth, myself and other people have been really close to for over a decade, so yeah, there's a certain amount of tongue-in-cheek and cynicism implied," Markey says about his documentary. Still, he admits there's no denying the humor in suddenly being "hot." "Personally, it was a great source of amusement," the filmmaker says, holding back a grin.

Audiences, likewise, will be entertained by Sonic's ode to the Kevin "It was near" Costner scene in Madonna's concert film *Truth or Dare* (Youth followers know that the band released an album of Blonde One covers under the

name Ciccone Youth in 1988). Cobain does the honors of impersonating Mr. *Dances With Wolves* while Gordon appropriately faux-pukes after the wretched comment.

So far as paying tribute, Markey was beside himself when it came to shooting the legendary Ramones. "The footage is really great because I had to sneak my camera to film them," he says. "They had all these guys around that were like, 'No cameras, no, photos.' I never thought that I'd ever get to film The Ramones."

Having been on both sides of the stage has helped Markey hone his filmmaking skills. "I was a drummer and I've always thought that being a drummer helped me edit," he muses. "I don't know if that makes any sense. It's just precise chops."

Making his essential L.A. music scene *Lovedolls* movies starring Redd Kross was also a learning experience. "I basically discovered that everything in the first *Lovedolls* film was true in my dealings with the corporate infrastructure," Markey says with a laugh. "It's kind of sick."

While his mid-'80s low-budget features still enjoy a steady underground following, Markey says, "I think the *Lovedolls* films have yet to reach the audience that I hope will always be

there for them." But don't expect to see the trilogy completed anytime soon. "I haven't really been stoked to do the third one," says the director. "I've said I would do it only if it was in 3-D."

Maybe with the success of 1991 Markey might afford a real budget for his next project. Of course, should this happen, there will be accusations of "selling out." "I think we should destroy the bogus capitalist process that is destroying youth culture by mass-marketing and commercial paranoia behavior control," Moore says in the film. This statement not only confirms the average alternative music fan's mentality, but also echoes the criticism Sonic Youth themselves endured when they signed to DGC. Markey relates, "If you're dealing with the corporate structure—in theory

alone—it lends itself to certain amount of resentment and backlash. But when you think about it, all the original punk rock bands were on major labels—The Pistols, The Clash. In Sonic Youth's case, coming out of the independent music scene, there was just no other place for them to go. And they handled it very well. They were able to take it to the corporate structure and still maintain their individual identity."

Does Markey think grass-roots filmmaking will also get the same financial support alternative music is presently receiving? "It seems like a natural act that's spilling over to film," he says. "There's a lot of independent filmmakers that are being licensed to work within the structure of the system and still do what they want, people like Gus Van Sant, Gregg Araki."

When asked about his next movie, Markey answers, "I'm gonna make a grunge snuff film," before breaking up. "I was talking to Mudhoney (who have a non-performing appearance in 1991) on the phone and Mark [Arm, the lead singer] said he was actually willing to die in a film. So we'll see about getting that funded," he says smiling.

In the meantime, Markey has been directing music videos. His list of credits include FIREHOSE, Mudhoney, Gumball, Fudge Tunnel and others. "I hate music," he deadpans. "No, that's just my old man jadedness kicking in. I'm trying to piece together my own psycho-babble from years of notebook scribbles and put it all into one film."

On that note, mention of the rumored Guns 'N Roses movie arises. Does Markey have any advice to whoever makes the proposed feature? "Don't let Axl direct." **[FVG]**

Filmmaker Dave Markey is still working with Super 8—and The Year Punk Broke can be found at a music store near you via media conglomerate Geffen Video.



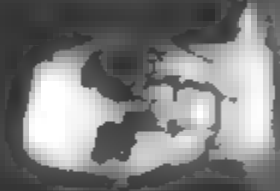
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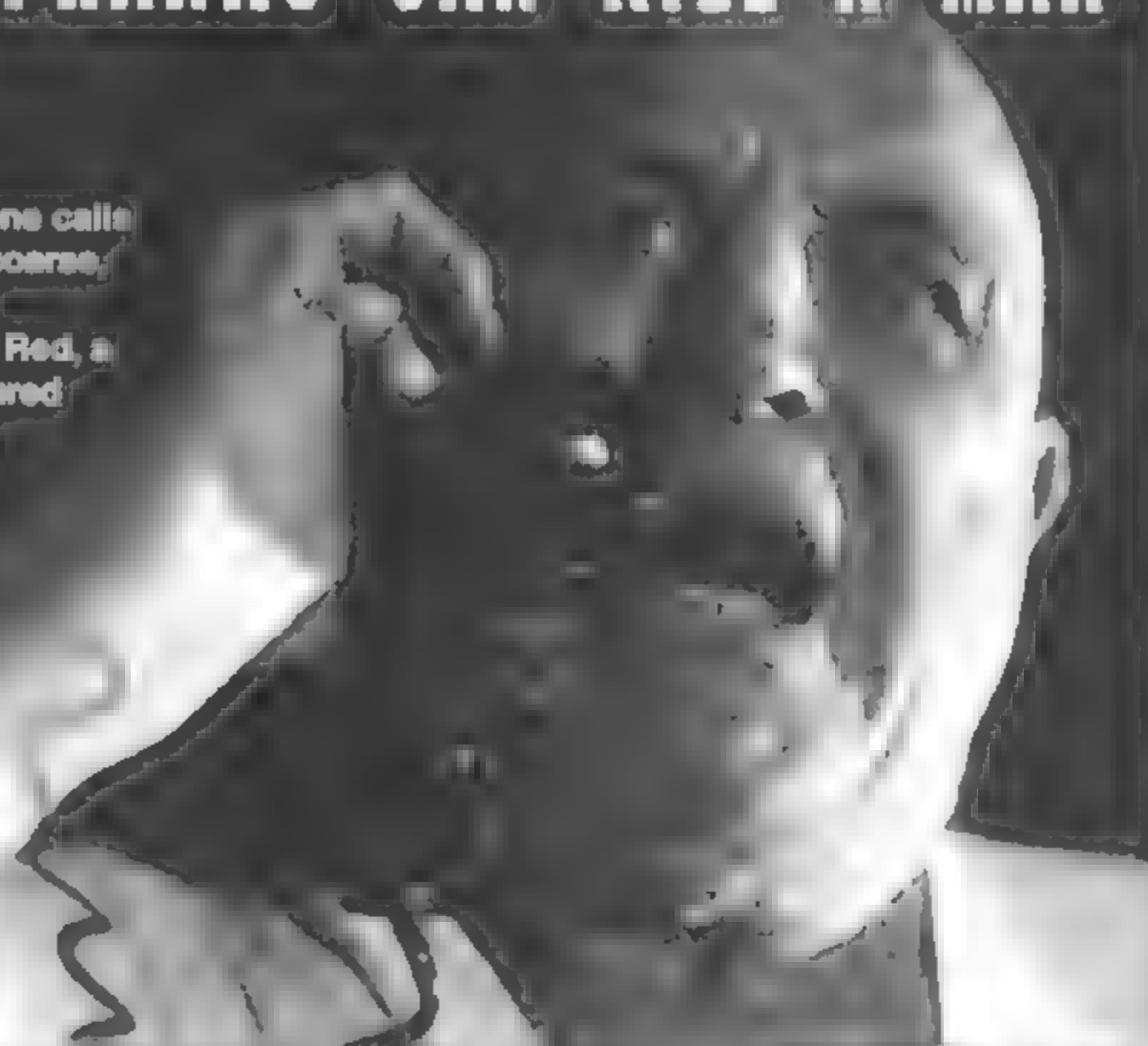
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Mast MACHINES,



The Torture Room waits.

A Man enters.

He begins to undress.

He is nude.

Sheree Rose

erling

MEAT & MOVIES

Filmmaker Jonathan Reiss forges ahead in his celluloid investigations of twisted metal, fragile flesh and plenty of well-placed subversion.

By David E. Williams

THROUGH Vaughn I discovered the true significance of the automobile crash, the meaning of whiplash injuries and roll-over, the ecstasies of head-on collisions. Together we visited the Road Research Laboratory twenty miles to the west of London, and watched the calibrated vehicles crashing into concrete target blocks. Later, in his apartment, Vaughn screened slow-motion films of test calibrations that he had photographed with his cine-camera.

from Crash, by J.G. Ballard



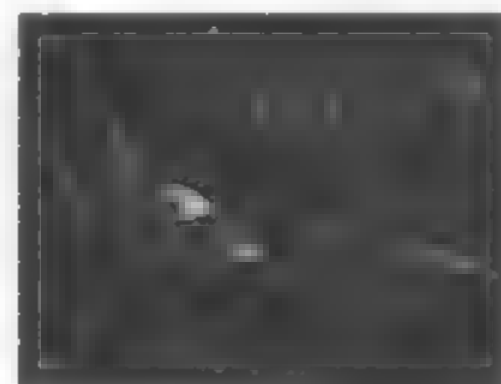
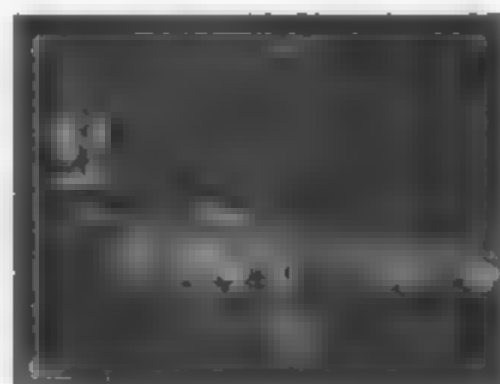
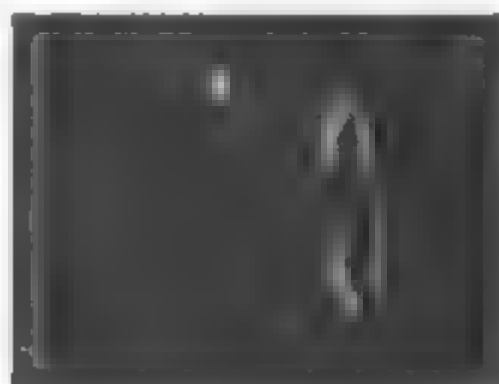
Men in Black: Trent Reznor on the SLAVY set with Jon Reiss.

(plus a nearly complete collection of Ballard first editions)—but whose isn't these days?

So how does such a seemingly average Jon, the product of a middle class upbringing and a UCLA education, devise a machines-only world in which steel-framed and bone-encrusted inhabitants cavort amidst tar-seeping

walls? Despite whatever public perception has evolved around Jonathan Reiss' video and film work, he's a pretty normal guy. Sure, his office is decorated with blessed Tibetan skulls, glass cases filled with hideous insects and shelves laden with serial killer documentation

walls? A viciously automated torture chair bent on literally devouring its occupants? A fetish dungeon populated by leather-clad vixens wielding cat 'o nine tails against bare male flesh and piercing erect nipples with hypodermic needles?



He stares into a mirror.

He climbs into The Chair.

The mechanism activates.

Rising, it locks into place.



Cinematographer Leonard Levy (behind camera), Jonathan Reiss and Mark Pauline on the set of *Bitter Message* or *Hopeless Game*.

THE DECENT INTO HELL

"I tried to get ahold of him for months!" exclaimed Reiss one afternoon, tooling his fashionably battered Dodge Dart through mid-day Los Angeles traffic. "Richard Kern was one person who knew how to self-distribute his films to a specific audience and I knew that same audience would be interested in the work I was doing with SRL, especially *Bitter Message*—but I never got the information out of him." Pulling into a restaurant parking lot, Reiss added, "But that was years ago. We did it without him."

And from the following conversation, it became obvious that the fiercely independent attitude that drove Reiss over the last ten years had not diminished—but intensified.

By 1981 Reiss had already cut his teeth producing, shooting and editing dozens of live concert videos as a part of Joe Rees' infamous Target Video organization [see story p. 67]. A sort of punk media collective, the grass-roots San Francisco group documented liter-

They work as a horror film might, in that you get the experience of terror without the physical danger."

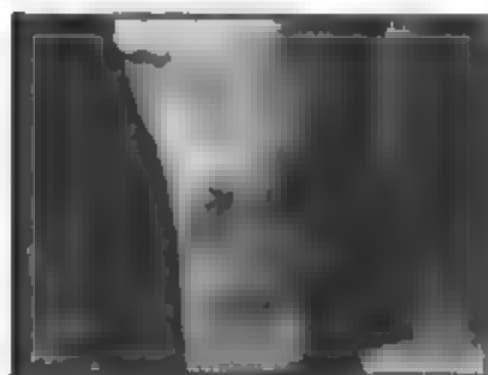
—Reiss on the SRL performance tapes

ally hundreds of bands and artists. Included were The Dead Kennedys, Lydia Lunch with Teen-Age Jesus and the Jerks and early SRL performances featuring a bespectacled Mark Pauline toying with his then-crude mechanical creations—which Reiss, Rees and Pauline edited into *Seven Machine Performances* (1982), the first SRL video release through Target.

"So I became more involved with Joe on the next videos [*A Scenic Harvest From The Kingdom of Pain* (1984) and *The Virtues of Negative Fascination* (1986)]," Reiss says. "I already had interest in the kinds of things Mark was exploring in his first shows—the effects of technology on society and power relationships—but the prospect of taking elements from them and recombining them with video was something else. We could redefine the events and emphasize specifics by removing extraneous material. That was a big part of what we were doing at Target anyways, but with music. Also, the SRL performances were very political without relying on words or lyrics—much more visual, so I felt there was a lot to work with and a lot of different aspects to the machines, other than just documenting the shows, that could be further explored. Using them in my film *Baited Trap* [in 1986] as these nightmarish dream figures was part of that idea.

"Of course none of the SRL performance tapes are documentaries—even the first [*Seven Machine Performances*], which is relatively simplistic—but they present an essence of what it was like to be there. They work as a horror film might, in that you get the experience of terror without the physical danger."

At least for the audience at home.



His hands relax

Steel restraints lock them in

He watches with anticipation

Needles pierce his wrists



(FROM LEFT): DP Gary Tieshe shoots Flannigan with his wind-up; a reluctant Reznor is caged in the video opener; Reiss is put in The Chair by clowning MBP FX guys Luke Khanian and Dave Doupis; Flannigan is relatively unscarred.

Leaving Target, Reiss focused on the development of an autonomous video division of SRL, attempting to redefine each successive video by successfully producing broadcast quality programming (*The Will to Provoke* in 1988) and, ultimately, a machine-purist" scenario devoid of human presence or meaning—resulting in the machines-only short *A Bitter Message of Hopeless Grief* (1988).

That decade of subsisting on his wits and personal deficit spending turned this self-described "white boy from the suburbs born with every advantage" into someone aware of the importance of filmmaking's dark side—*business*.

During the production of the trip-vich video document *The Pleasures of Uninhibited Excess* (1990), Reiss realized his direct association with SRL was coming to a close—with creative differences with Pauline and Reiss' growing interest in doing feature film work hastening the split.

"I'd done most everything I wanted to with SRL, and while I'd certainly consider future projects with Mark, it was time to do something else," the filmmaker explains diplomatically.

I first met Reiss while trying to secure video distribution rights to *Bitter Message*—and his other SRL-related titles—which had never really been released in any organized manner outside of mail-order through SRL. To my dismay, Rick Rubin's iconoclastic Def American record label had decided to dabble in video and tied up the entire SRL catalog. At the time, Reiss himself was tied up with problems regarding the fate of his first feature, *Love Is Like That*. Directed by his wife, Jill Goldman, the entertainingly bizarre romantic comedy (starring Tom Sizemore and Pamela Gidley) had fallen into a distribution hell it has yet to escape.

I was contacted some months later by a record company PR rep, who was seeking a director for an industrial-

strength, Nine Inch Nails music video. She explained that metals-specialist Shinya Tsukamoto (*Tetsuo: The Iron Man*) had been the first choice, but was unavailable—then off helming *Tetsuo II: The Body Hammer*—and wondered if I knew anyone of similar interests.

I quickly found pimping to be a natural talent—though I didn't tell Reiss he was a *second* choice.

A TASTE FOR PAIN

The resulting video, for the tune "Happiness In Slavery" from NIN's it-rook-fucking-forever-and-only-has-six-songs EP *Broken*, took shape in a warehouse near beautiful downtown Burbank over a perilously hot three days. But for some, the dry heat was only a secondary discomfort.

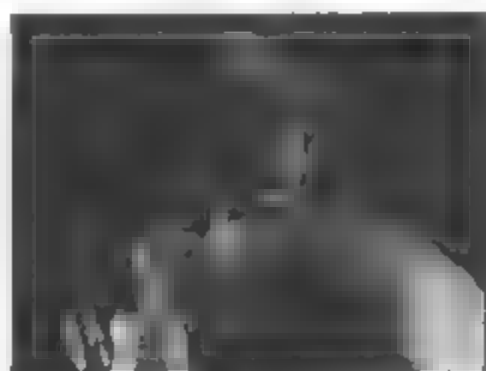
A masochist's ultimate fantasy, Reiss' *Slavery* premise offers a man consumed by ritualistic self-abuse—obsessed with the prospect of having a tormentor who will not listen to his



He reacts with a sick grin.



A steel pincher moves in.



It selects a target.



The sharp claw digs in.



Relax lines up the next shot as Flannigan relaxes—as much as possible.

shrieks of pain or cries for pity. The result was "The Chair," *Slavery's* brutally automated antagonist. Though it appears to be the manifestation of a Nazi dentist's wet dream, it's actually the product of Michael Burnett Productions, a local effects company responsible for the latex-built carnage in such Hollywood tripe as *Universal Soldier*. Powered by high pressure air lines, the contraption boasts multiple spiderlike arms wielding spinning blades, three-pronged pincers and gouging drills. The Chair is a torture device completely in tune for the 90s: High-tech yet malignantly Medieval. Like some La-Z-Boy Terminator, it will not stop until it completes its task—one that Reiss' storyboards have outlined in graphic, black-and-white detail. Let's just say that this clash of flesh and steel has the expected outcome—times ten—as servomotors beat out muscle and bone again.

**"I think I scared
some people on
the set because
I could imagine
what it would
be like to have
metal claws tear-
ing at my flesh."**

—Bob Flannigan

Performance artist/actor Bob Flannigan, who lay strapped within the steel and leather confines of The Chair, is nude—save for some smears and chunks of special makeup posing as bloody bits of skin and flesh. Flannigan is one of the few people on set who isn't sticky with sweat—just crimson-stained Karo syrup.

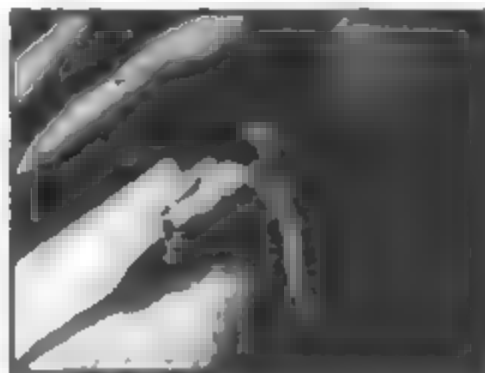
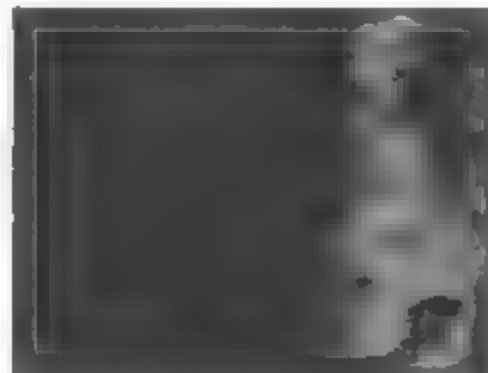
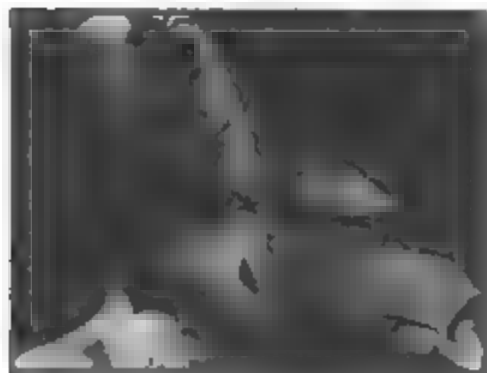
"The penis should be pointed down," Reiss explains clinically, circling The Chair and the MBP makeup artists working on Flannigan. "Otherwise it would appear that he was erect, and that wouldn't be correct for this shot."

Yeah, as if a horrifically tortured man smeared with gore should have an erection in *any* shot.

Eyes searching for a pair of already "blood"-stained hands to perform his obvious bidding, it's soon apparent to Reiss that the supposedly unshakable gore gurus aren't up to the task of repositioning the nonthreatening extremity. Out of the shadows appears Flannigan's girlfriend, Sherree Rose, to perform the dirty deed—much to the relief of the squeamish crew.

FLOWERS, ASSHOLES & WORMS

Directly inspired by Octave Mirbeau's 1899-penned, long-banned erotigore novel *The Torture Garden*—in which twisted desires play out against the backdrop of a Chinese garden where torture is practiced as an art-form—the *Slavery* set features a small plot of tangled greenery surrounding The Chair. Two PAs will spend the following 48 hours trying to keep the array of vegetation alive, but it'll be worth it if only for the sake of the inherently sick joke attached. You see, within the context of the film, the plants feed on the blood and greasy spoils of processed Chair inhabitants—



He readies him self for pain.

He screams as it strikes.

The pincher tears at his flesh.

It pulls out a bloody hunk.



Reiss shoots the bone and steel details of the torture room.

which are delivered via a metallic "ass-hole" installed behind the machine's pedestal.

Like some annex to the *Bitter Message* machine world, the set similarly boasts a dirt floor, canvas coated surfaces and meter-long seeps of tar emanating from the walls. As designed by Liz Young, who not-coincidentally art directed *Message*, the place seems like a natural habitat to Reiss, who jokes with the crew adjusting The Chair's power-recliner mechanism. Meanwhile NIN's Trent Reznor wanders about, videotaping the day's gruesome events.

"I'd just suggest that we see some more meaty chunks come out, like more of a stream," Reznor comments after watching the MBP team force-feed a choice mix of cow brains, foam latex and assorted gore through the sphincter-like orifice, eliciting nervously ghoulish laughs from the crew and retching sounds from several vegetarian-looking PAs. Pausing to watch another take on a video monitor, he

confesses, "This is really amazing, I mean, the only other videos we've done have been these little Super 8 jobs. But this—this is really *happening*."

From the person who transformed a notorious living room in a certain house on Cielo Drive in the Hollywood hills into his recording studio—complete with a decorative American flag—Reznor's thrill over the afternoon's events bordered on irony.

The guts are run through the sphincter again and, much to everyone's disgust, they have reached that magically realistic consistency; oozing out with a seriously gross *splat*. Satisfied, Reiss and others begin dressing the set with massive night-crawlers—huge, slimy ones that immediately begin burrowing into the garden's soft brown soil and the even softer pile of glistening offal.

"Pretty glamorous, huh?" says Reiss jovially with worm in hand as director of photography Gary Tieche captures the annelids on film with his wind-up



Reiss helps pile on the blood and guts for the goriffic finale.



Flannigan watches the pincher with some degree of interest.

Bell & Howell camera. Tieche is a guy of Clint Eastwood-like stature and vocalness who obviously prefers to communicate with his camera. He just smiles, peering into his eyepiece to see the magnified bait-worms twist amidst the blood, brains and blossoms.

PIGS TO THE SLAUGHTER

Flannigan's chest heaves spasmodically as he battles a coughing fit brought on by his cystic fibrosis. Fortunately, the actor's real-life obsession with confinement as sexual gratification uniquely qualifies him for the role—making the situation less a torture than a personal challenge. He relates the experience to an old cartoon he had seen as a child. Entitled *Pigs Is Pigs* (Warner Bros., 1938), the toon featured an automated chair that force-fed its subject—an image that stayed with Flannigan, brewing seductively in the back of his mind as an early influence on his S&M lifestyle.

"I've always had this erotic thing about force-feeding and being strapped



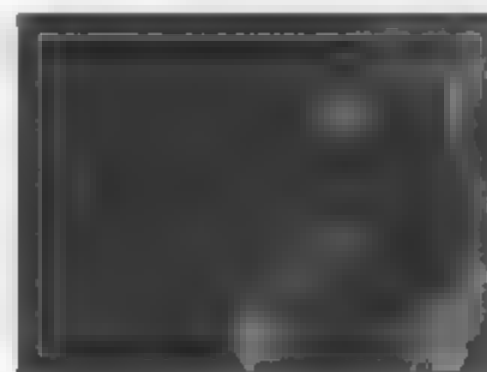
He screams with pain.



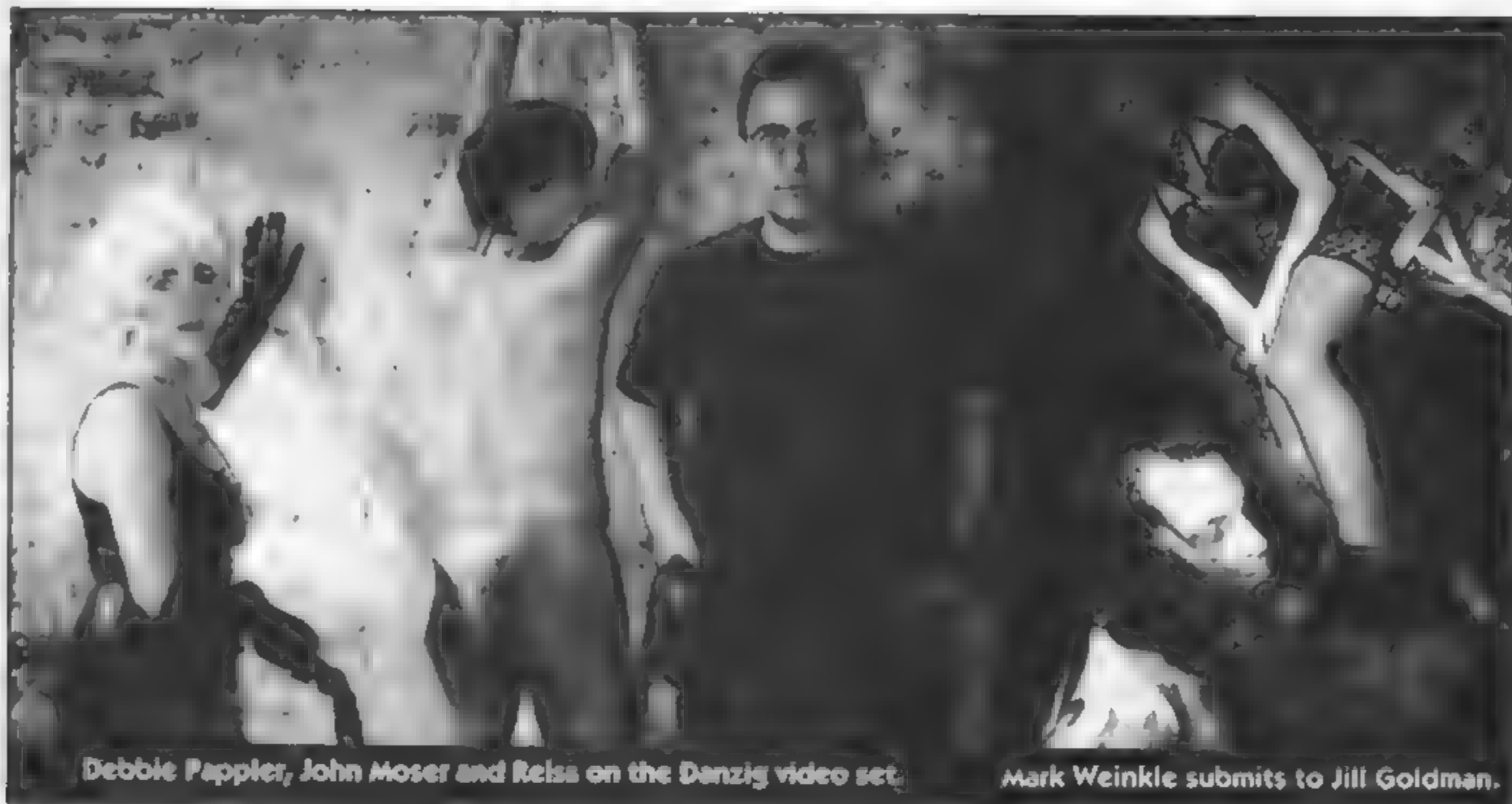
The drill comes into play.



It sinks in below the knee.



He twists in agony.



Debbie Pappler, John Moser and Reiss on the Danzig video set.

Mark Weinkle submits to Jill Goldman.

to chairs, so this cartoon was always major for me," Flannigan later explained. "Years later, I acquired a copy and it was all there, just like I'd remembered it. So here I was, living out my fantasy.

"I don't know that Jon [Reiss] had ever seen the cartoon, I hadn't even told him about it until after I read the script, but he had seen a show I'd done a few years ago at a publication party for the Re/Search book *Modern Primitives*. In it, I was strapped to a chair and had all these clothes pins attached to my body. They were attached by wires to a system of weights that would pull them off in order over time. Through osmosis, I think Jon picked up some elements of that, but it's really amazing how it would all come together in the video.

"I've always liked the idea of machines doing something to me—submitting to your fate. I've also

always been interested in time-based autoerotic sadomasochistic events for pleasure. Whether it be clothespins attached to me with dripping water filling a container, building up enough weight to pull it off, or locking myself up in handcuffs and waiting for a block of ice with the key inside to melt so I can get out—they're all mechanical things I have no control over. The Chair is exactly like that, but it's the ultimate. It's a suicidal final act. It's programmed to do certain things without even a person there to appeal to—you've made the decision to be there."

Of course one fundamental difference between the activities depicted in the *Slavery* video and Flannigan's S&M expertise is that the experience is inherently false, without real danger or pain.

"It wasn't a turn on," Flannigan admits. "With the crew, the fact that

filmmaking demands you to break events into tiny segments—but it was an act that mirrored some real feelings and experiences. I think I scared some people on the set because I could imagine what it would be like to have metal claws tearing at my flesh—I could imagine that pain and and perform appropriately. It was fun to see their reactions—that was real."

Since completing *Slavery*, Flannigan (also the subject of an upcoming Re/Search profile) has put this ability to work by acting in director Michael Tolkin's feature, *New Age*. In it, Flannigan graphically demonstrates his affinity for pain with a bed of nails.

SNUFF FILM JITTERS

The MBP team of Luke Khanlian and Dave Doupis are still dabbing Flannigan with faux gore of gelatin, mashed bananas and food coloring—



The Chair runs amok. The pain is unbearable. He dies and is processed. Out through the sphincter.

promising Reiss that ten more minutes would ensure their work's authenticity. The director relents. After years of documenting live SRL shows with combat photography techniques that often put his crew and collaborators in the midst of barely controllable, flame-belching, metal behemoths bent on destroying one another, Reiss appreciates the relative safety of "makeup effects" as opposed to bodily harm.

A crewperson mutters that they feel as if they are working on a snuff film. In an abstract sense, they are—making Reiss' calm professionalism and smiles seem even more curious. But the feeling prompts others to take drastic measures.

One hulking production member confronts me in the bathroom, demanding that I give him the film in my camera. He claims that he'd been caught in several of the shots I'd taken of the set and that he couldn't allow people to know that he had been associated with such a heinous project. Fortunately, he wasn't a complete idiot and relented to my careful rebuttal—asking only that I send the negatives and any prints including his ugly mug to a certain Van Nuys address, presumably for a hasty destruction. No problem, I lied, realizing it was time to leave.

AFTERMATH

As finished, *Happiness In Slavery* is at best reprehensible and repellent, garnering strong reaction from all who see it. Entertainment trade papers ran reports about it being a hit among record execs and those few civilians lucky enough not to rely solely on the panty-waists at MTV for access to new music—as the FCC regulations-less cable channel is apparently too preoccupied with the oh-so-alternative likes

of Aerosmith to make room for the clip. Most entertainingly, a friend tormented director Oliver Stone with a copy—prompting him to run about the office clutching his genitals while demanding that it be turned off.

Keeping in contact with Reiss in connection to this story, I last saw him peering into a video monitor while working on a video for the Gothic-metal group Danzig—which followed clips for the groups Mindbomb and Proper Grounds. In one scene, a woman encased in a patent leather corset tortures a cadre of men with a whip, her stiletto heels and plenty of harsh looks. She appears to have the sadistic gusto of a professional.

Turning to me, Reiss pointed at the dominatrix and said, "That's my wife, Jill. Did you recognize her?"

Somewhat shocked, I admitted I hadn't.

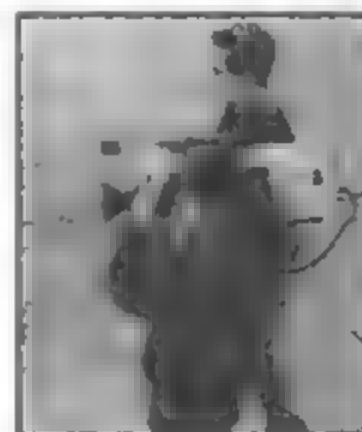
"She really got into the role, but now everybody probably thinks we're into that stuff—like we have this complete subterranean room at home full of bondage gear."

Yeah, right next to the blessed Tibetan skull collection. **(TV-14)**

REISS/SRL FILMOGRAPHY

SEVEN MACHINE PERFORMANCES

(Target Video/SRL)
Editing—Joe Rees, Jon Reiss & Mark Pauline
(53 min./Video 1979-82)



Reiss and Gladys

A SCENIC HARVEST FROM THE KINGDOM OF PAIN

(Target Video/SRL)
Producer/Director/Editor—J. Reiss
Machines—M. Pauline, Matt Heckert, Eric Werner & SRL
(53 min./Video 1984)

BAITED TRAP (Reiss/SRL)

Writer/Producer/
Director/Editor—J. Reiss
Cinematography—
Leonard Levy
Art Direction—Liz Young
Machines—M. Pauline,
M. Heckert & SRL
(12 min./16mm/B&W 1986)



BAITED TRAP

THE VIRTUES OF NEGATIVE FASCINATION (Target Video/SRL)

Producer/Director/Editor—J. Reiss
Machines—M. Pauline, M. Heckert & SRL
(70 min./Video 1986)

THE WILL TO PROVOKE (SRL/Reiss/Gladys)

Producer/Director—J. Reiss
Editor—Leslie Asako Gladys
Machines—M. Pauline, M. Heckert & SRL
(48 min./Video 1988)

A BITTER MESSAGE OF HOPELESS GRIEF (SRL/Reiss)

Producer/Director/Editor—J. Reiss
Machines and Fictional World—
M. Pauline, M. Heckert & SRL
Cinematography—L. Levy
Art Direction—L. Young
(13 min./16mm 1988)

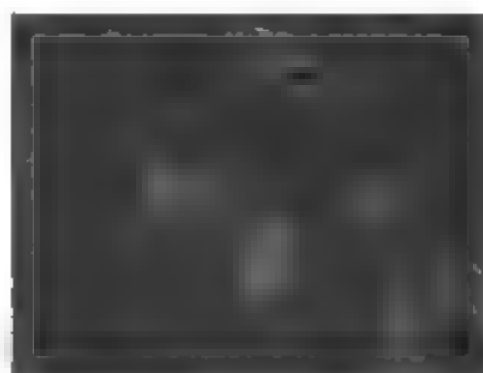


BITTER MESSAGE

THE PLEASURES OF UNINHIBITED EXCESS (SRL/Reiss/Gladys)

Producer—J. Reiss
Directors—J. Reiss, L. A. Gladys
Editor—L. A. Gladys
Machines—M. Pauline & SRL (44 min./Video 1990)

The Will to Provoke was released by Def American Visuals and can be easily had. For others, contact SRL at 1458 San Bruno Ave. Bldg C, San Francisco, CA 94110





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THE DEVIL



Jimmy (Terek Puckett) and Ricky (Jim Van Bebber) are just your typical suburban, devil-worshipping, murderous youths in *MY SWEET SATAN*.

MAKES HIM DO IT

*An informal
ramblerant with
writer/actor/director
JIM VAN BEBBER
about drugs, death
and deviancy
(amongst other things).*

by Graham Rae

When I do my job I do it well
If you want blood just ring my bell
Don't talk to me man I got a gun
And I don't quit until I'm done

The Vindictives
"Ugly American"

JIM VAN BEBBER. SOME of you may be familiar with the 16mm work of this 28-year-old native of Dayton, Ohio. Many others will not, and it is to these slothful unfortunates that I issue this call: "WAKE FUCKING UP!" For the last half decade this celluloid maniac has been gracing us with his own personal

brand of hard-edged, no-punches-pulled visceral filmmaking, and it's about time he got more recognition for it. Be the subject gang warfare (the feature-length debut from Van Bebber, *Deadbeat At Dawn*), serial killing (the fifteen-minute short, *Roadkill: The Last Days of John Martin*) or drugged teens tipping over the edge of sanity into murder (the twenty-two-minute short *My Sweet Satan*, based on the real-life Ricky Kasso murder/suicide case), Van Bebber has been right in there to document it in his own graphic and unflinching style. This guy is out to make films his way, no matter how

long it may take, letting nobody and nothing stop him. A laudable attitude in these sterile and entropic times. We catch up with the Maestro of Mayhem just as he is finally finishing shooting his second full-length feature, *Charlie's Family*, his five-years-in-the-making final word(?) on Chuck Manson and his wacky bunch of murderous followers.

The Spahn Ranch will never seem the same again after this baby hits the screens, so without further ado let's dive right in and meet the documentor of urban nightmares, in whichever form they may choose to come.

So how long have you been making films?

I started making short Super 8 films when I was eleven. I got a scholarship to Wright State University's Motion Picture Program because of a forty minute film I'd made.

Did you find film school a good learning experience? Aren't they homogenizing factories churning out directors who all make the same stuff?

Well, yeah, I think it depends what you want out of it; I went to Wright State knowing I wanted to learn the technology of 16mm and, once I'd done that, just get out of there. I had a couple of great tutors, James Klein and Julia Reichert, documentarians who've been nominated twice for Academy Awards. Meeting them was great, which is where I met my partners Marcello Games and Mike King [Note: Games and King are partners in Mercury Films, the company formed by the cinematic triptych after they left school—Graham]. By the

third year of college I knew my way around 16mm and was looking at dropping out with Mike and Marcello, so I took out a student loan saying that I was going to do a third year in school. Instead I bought ten rolls of film with the money and we started shooting *Deadbeat at Dawn*.



Marcello Games gets downright Satanic as Charles Manson in Van Bibber's soon-to-be completed feature *CHARLIE'S FAMILY*.

Have you always been interested in real-life horror?

Well, when I was growing up I was making Ray Harryhausen-type, animated dinosaur films, but ever since I was in college I've thought real life is so much more fantastic than most fiction—it has that edge to it, it has that darkness. It could happen to you.

*Where did the idea for *Deadbeat at Dawn* come from? It seemed like a nostalgic throwback to *The Warriors* or *The Wanderers* type of gang film as opposed to the newer gang flicks.*

Oh no. *Deadbeat* is almost like a

tribute to the American International Pictures biker films of the late sixties like the *Wild Angels*, the *Glory Stompers*, mixed in with psychedelia and—we mixed in a lot of drugs.

I noticed. Where did you learn how to do make-up effects? Are you self-taught?

Yeah. After I saw *Dawn of The*

Dead I got interested in FX and started experimenting, making short films and putting FX in them until I just got better at it until, when we were making *Deadbeat at Dawn*, I pretty much had to handle the FX because of the budget. And that's the way it's been for *Charlie's Family*. I'm good enough to pull something off on 16mm but it's not my forte. I had the pleasure of working with Tim Gore on the "Spasmolytic" video. [For the industrial band Skinny Puppy. Jim has directed two videos for this band—Graham] He was handling the FX and that

was a joy. He also did all the FX for Skinny Puppy's last tour.

How did you first get involved with Skinny Puppy?

Well, I met two of the members when I was doing *Chunkblower*. [A Chas Balun-scripted film that never progressed past the trailer stage—Graham] I later hooked up with them when they were touring; they came to Dayton and I shot footage of them. I met them once more in San Antonio, which was when they asked me if I wanted to direct the "Spasmolytic" video.



Tex (Marc Pitman) throws a diabolical glare in *Charlie's Family*.

Whatever happened to Chunk-blower? Did it just disappear?

Well, it's still (producer) Gary Blair Smith's property but I haven't heard from him in a while. The money he had arranged fell through and he's been working lately for bands in Vancouver through his company, Plasma Films. It could be a great little film, and maybe it'll still happen.

*Deadbeat at Dawn took three-and-a-half years to complete, and *Charlie's Family* has taken a similarly protracted length of time. Where do you find the stamina to keep a project alive without just throwing up your hands and going "Aw fuck this!"?*

No, that's impossible. Once you get so far into a film, and I can see what I've got and where it's going, the logical thing to do is keep going; and secondly it's (*Charlie's Family*) a really hot movie and if it takes another five years I'll get through it in the end. It's an addiction; you're a fucking junkie. A shoot is like a fix; you'll beg, steal and borrow to get that shoot, to get your fuckin' fix.

*Did you ever end up making anything at all from *Deadbeat at Dawn*?*

No, but somebody did—the distribution company we're in litigation with right now. They made a bit I think, so we're trying to get the rights back. Foreign distribution

could be a little bit, like forty grand, but we're currently looking for new representatives to go to the market with.

Have you any advice for first-time filmmakers on how not to get screwed on their first deal, or is this an inevitable rite of financial passage?

I think, yeah, you're gonna get screwed a little bit somehow. My advice is just get all of your release forms signed, get a lawyer to look over contracts, and try to get advance money from distribution companies wherever possible.

You've acted in most of your own films. Is this something more of a financial necessity than a luxury you enjoy?

It's a luxury I enjoy. I enjoy actors and all the personal little trips each has to undergo to make . . . whatever happen. Acting in my own films adds a whole new dimension to them for me.

*Are you still interested in making a full-length version of *Roadkill* then?*

Oh yeah, definitely, it's gonna happen.

Do you honestly think the world needs another serial killer film?

Oh, mine will be different. When it comes out there won't be anything like it.

You know that Jorg Buttgereit's new film is about a serial killer?

Yeah, *Schramm*, I can't wait to see it. I love his work, he's a wizard. But I don't think it'll be anything like *Roadkill*, even from the point of view that I'm an American and he's German.



LEFT: Tina Martin is the beautiful yet doomed Sharon. BELOW: Sadie (Maureen Allise) and Patty (Leslie Orr) are *Charlie's Family*.





Mark Gillespie as the beer-swilling cannibal in Van Bebbler's grim 1988 short *ROADKILL: THE LAST DAY OF JOHN MARTIN*

"It's an addiction; you're a fucking junkie. A shoot is like a fix; you'll beg, steal and borrow to get that shoot, to get your fuckin' fix."

—JIM VAN BEBBER

Steve Bissette wrote in *Deep Red Alert* that your work had a moral imperative, forcing the noses of the jaded and voyeuristic audience out there who think they've seen everything into the stuff they think they want to see and then making them sick with it. Would you agree?

Yeah, I think so. I actually believe there is a morality at work in my films because, unlike say [*Demolition Man* producer] Joel Silver, I treat violence with the respect it deserves. Violence shouldn't be dealt with in films unless you are responsible for the violence you portray. These films are based on hideous incidents, so if the audience doesn't feel anything you're not doing your job correctly.

You mention Joel Silver. Do you think you could work within the Hollywood system, given the chance, to produce a ten million dollar film with an 'R'-rating and a happy ending?

Well, I'd love to try. I'd love to see what I could do with a big budget and I'm sure I could do an 'R'-rated film, but a happy ending, I dunno. But like I said, I'd love to try. I'm not even thirty yet, so... what the fuck.

What was it about the Ricky Kasso case that inspired you to make *My Sweet Satan*?

I read a lot of true crime paperbacks, and there was something about that one [*Say You Love Satan*] that just rang true about my growing up through high school. I graduated in

1983, Kasso killed that kid in '84. It had a lot of stuff I could relate to: angel dust, dope, that small-town experience... a lot of elements. I always thought it would make a great feature, but I decided to make a short film and condense it, playing loose with the facts, set it in Dayton, Ohio and give it a 1993 feel.

Have you been part of that psychoactive lifestyle—getting wiped out and fucking about?

Oh, Sure

What's your favorite drug then?

Ummm... I'd have to say marijuana.

Marijuana's something you can grow old with—everything takes its toll after so much time—and I plan on growing old.

Some people can watch the graphic murders in *Satan* with no trouble at all, but they balk at the nipple piercing scene. Have you ever noticed this effect on audiences yourself?

Oh yeah, yeah, because after a while they figure out the nipple scene is real. It depends on your audience: some people are okay, but some can't quite deal with it.

Amongst some of the druggy characters I know, *Satan* is one of their favorite films, yet it's a scathing critique of their hollow



John Martin (Gillespie) makes short work of two teens (Marc Pitman and Maureen Allse) in *ROADKILL*, a barely watchable climax



Van Bibber stars as Goose in *Deadbeat At Dawn*—Dawn, another feature fostered over a period of years. Here: The original one-sheet from 1967

lifestyle.

Oh yeah, as a *lifestyle* it's a pretty narrow street to travel. What I've observed is that kids stay in that sort of a rut—I guess—for three or four years in their early twenties then advance on into some other form of lifestyle.

What do you think a proper label for your films would be, if they had to have one? "Urban horror" maybe?

Well, I dunno. The only film of mine I would call horror—true horror—is *The Last Days Of John Martin*. *My Sweet Satan* was true crime, so is *Charlie's Family*, and *Deadbeat At Dawn's* action, so

My mother watched My Sweet Satan and she thinks you're a good actor. But how did you manage to get the city fathers of Dayton to cooperate with the filming of Satan after all the hassles you gave them during the filming of Deadbeat?

[Van Bibber, having no permits to shoot on city streets or public places, would often adopt a 'shoot-and-run' policy that involved the production with the police more than once; the police officers in *Deadbeat's* cemetery fight scene are real and were unplanned.—Graham]

Well, in a small way, *Deadbeat* helped Wright State get its grant for an extra wing for the motion picture department.

Was it a sort of 'We have local talent, so we've got to have more funds'?

Exactly.

What's the status on Charlie's Family? Are you currently winding up?

Yeah. We finally scored the cash to finish shooting the last remaining big scenes. We'll be shooting all through August then we'll be wrapped with all the photography. It's then a matter of raising the funds to start sound editing so I can start picture editing. We started in '88, so we've been stopping and starting for five years.

Where did you get the money, did you rob a bank or something?

No [Laughs]. We finally got an investor, somebody we'd been talking



"These films are based on hideous incidents, so if the audience doesn't feel anything you're not doing your job correctly."

—JIM VAN BEBBER

In 1988, Van Bebber directed the Tate murder scene in *CHARLIE'S FAMILY*, which will have taken five years to finish.

to and he just came through. That's the way it's been; we've been shooting bits and pieces and showing it around to people. It's a really fucked up way to shoot a movie

Waking up every morning and praying that one of your lead actors hasn't been killed in a car crash or something?
Oh, exactly. Actually it serves this project because *Charlie's Family* is made up of episodes throughout a two-and-a-half-year timespan, so the subtle changes in the actors' appearances actually enhances the movie. Ironically, it helped.

Is your interest in Manson that of an acolyte or more that of an interested observer?

I'm interested in the attention that the case has received, in how much conflicting information there is. Basically it's a meditation on what the general public doesn't know about the case and, y'know, it just tries to be a real entertaining docu-drama

It occurred to me that one of the central themes of your films is how the desires and obsessions

of some people can reach out and fuck up the lives of others...

I believe wholeheartedly that no one's safe, at any time at all.

Don't you feel that by showing Manson in an unfavorable light, you'll be leaving yourself wide open to harassment from any of the freaky fuckin' characters out there who still regard Charlie as God?

Actually I think all viewpoints are represented in this film, so no one camp is going to be outraged at the way they're portrayed because it's all very close to reality. I don't even think it will offend the hardcore Manson fanatics but, you know, what the fuck,

who cares?! If you let a thing like that stop you from making a movie then you're just gutless trash. I'm hoping now we'll have a finished print by the beginning of the next year, for '94.

What's next after the epic Manson saga? Will it be the neo-Nazi skinhead film I've heard mentioned? What's the title?

There is no title, but right now we're calling it *CANA*, which stands for *Cleveland-Arkansas Neo-Nazi Actioner*. The script's getting very close to being finished, but that'll be an expensive movie—probably a couple million. So who knows, all I can think about right now is finishing *Charlie's Family*.

Sounds good. Have you got any closing remarks for the crazies out there who want to make their own films?

I'd just encourage people to shoot film instead of video—even Super 8 is not a bad way to go as long as you remember your sound is eighteen frames ahead of your picture when you're editing. But all film is F-stops, the approach to lighting is the same—it gets you ready for serious filmmaking because film stock, no matter what the gauge, is all film. It's just a better learning medium, in my opinion. **[TV-14]**

*After 7 long years, Van Bebber will finally finish his 16mm epic *Charlie's Family* in short order. Watch for it.*



Gary (Mike Moore) seals his own bloody fate by stealing from the demon-worshipping Ricky Kasso (Van Bebber) in *MY SWEET SATAN* (1993).



For those of you who don't remember, Gore and I had an experiment in filmmaking not long ago. And if it wasn't for Lawrence Tierney—before his *RESERVOIR DOGS* fame—it would have been fun...

SEEING RED

You've heard the tape, now see the movie! The not so epic story behind CHRISTIAN GORE's attempt to adapt an influential underground classic to the screen.

Article and photos by David E. Williams

ACTOR LAWRENCE Tierney (*Dillinger*, *Prizzi's Honor*, *Tough Guys Don't Dance*) likes ice cream, and for that reason, the third and final day of principal shooting on Christian Gore's upcoming film *Red* ground to a halt as producer Jonathan Hommel high tailed it to the store for a quart of vanilla. Meanwhile, the crew, made up of anyone foolish enough to consent to Gore's demonic directorial manner, took a much needed rest after 8 hours of problem plagued production.

The set, a cramped, crumbling, sleazy bar, was frighteningly realistic. Sadly, because it was an actual location. Yup, a real place located in the grimy center of Long Beach, California. The joint was a living hell that shouldn't even exist outside the Texas state lines, complete with two dozen 250lb, inebriated rednecks, a handful of women who seemed much too ugly to be hookers and a bartender who stopped the cameras on several occasions to complain that the shoot was chasing off his regulars.



Gore at his self-promoting best.

Collapsed into a beat-up, overstuffed chair, Tierney sat like a benevolent king on his golden throne—surveying the scene with a piercing squint as he waited for his frosty treat. A complete professional on the set, Tierney knows his character, lines and action inside and out and is ready at a moment's notice to assume his explosive role, a working knowledge of firearms and barroom brawling tactics adding depth to what could have been a one note depiction of the titular beleaguered bartender.

Then the vanilla ice cream arrived.

An hour later, the intrepid *Red* crew, including myself, stirred as a satisfied Tierney returned and the Von Stroheimesque Gore began barking orders under the hot lights...

Well, not really.

We were tired, the bar was a fucking dump and the women were pretty ugly, but, Gore wasn't barking orders.

It was actually more like this: As the star of the film, Tierney had the power to make this shoot a living hell. On the genuine upside, he also had the acting ability and sheer physical presence to make the film an underground classic. Gore knew it, the crew knew it, and, most importantly, Lawrence Tierney knew it.

As the (ahem!) director of photography on this production, I can assure you that between Tierney, the seedy bar locations, busty models and multiple camera snafus, this was probably the most difficult shoot I have ever dealt with. And this is my story.

Anyone familiar with Gore's campy, cartoon-like comedy *Ouch!*, his self-proclaimed "first watchable" film, will be surprised by his take on shooting the more ambitious *Red*.

Inspired by (i.e. baldly stealing from)

OPPOSITE: Lawrence Tierney lounges at the bar in *Red*.



Lawrence Tierney, as Red, goes into action with his trusty Louisville Slugger.

time-travel classic, *La Jette*, Gore is constructing much of the film from hundreds of 35mm still photographs that were taken during the shoot. Thusly, much of the film had to be shot first at 24 frames per second and then via my trusty Nikon. Barring camera, lighting, sound, performance, prop and other problems, I was faced with the fact that everything would take at least twice as long. If you know anything about filmmaking, then you know that actually means everything was sure to take TEN times longer. Oh, joy.

On the first day, low light situations, the burning glare from baby-oiled breasts, and the bleary haze of a bad hangover worked against me.

Shooting began at *Texas Chainsaw III* director Jeff Burr's house. He had sent his girlfriend out for the day (to shield her from Gore's warped sense of humor I suspect) and submitted to wearing a dress, saggy support stockings and nail polish. Jeff was playing Larry's wife. Oh, the humiliation. (Did I mention the overstuffed bra that made him look like Dolly Parton's ugly sister?)

Unfortunately, Larry wasn't tantalized in the least.

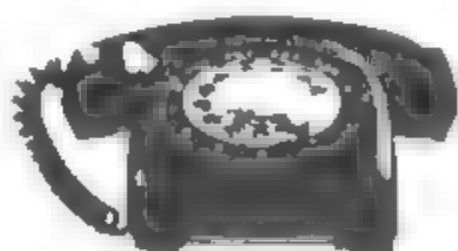
"Why does he have to play my wife?

Chris, why couldn't you get a woman at least?!" he bellowed with a distinctive grumble.

Consoling Larry soon became a full-time job for Chris.

Fortunately, things progressed well until the head-shaving scene. The bathroom was cramped and hot, light pouring from a 10,000 watt light that later turned out to be the most demonic device created by human hand.

"Chris, do all these people have to be in here while we're doin' this?" Larry asked for the third time.



**"Hey, can we get
some quiet in
here? Chris, shut
those guys up!"
-LAWRENCE TIERNEY**

As diplomatic as ever, Gore explained the situation and consoled his star. Tierney, though outspoken, was a true professional and put up with the hardship of having his peach fuzz trimmed by Burr, whose razor-wielding hand was noticeably shaky.

Breaking for lunch, a realization, though hardly a revelation, entered my mind. Gore was not really directing this film. In fact nobody was. Long considered a consummate manipulator and master of self-promotion, Gore was indeed in control of the shoot, but his methods relied more on the Hitchcockian delegation of authority theory than the more tried and true auteur-style "hands on" philosophy. Broken down, that means he was able to find the right people for the right job, set up the situation and let it happen.

"Roll camera, and action Larry!" Gore would call out hopefully, gesturing with a clutched hand.

At times, this method would fail, leaving Larry angrily confused and the camera wasting expensive film. However, due to the situation's inherent spontaneity, and the volatile formula of one part enraged actor, two parts exhausted crew and one part explosive material, Gore's plan would

WHAT AND WHO IS RED?

I was first introduced to the "Red" tape (also affectionately known as "The Tube Bar") in 1989 by my friend John Berado. Upon hearing it I laughed, but thought it was just a cute collection of phone pranks. Then I began endlessly, no, obsessively, quoting the tape—"Ya, Mutherfucker!"—and soon craved every piece of information about the guys who made it. Who was Red and where was he now? Berado had a lot of info and even a friend who trekked to the bar in New Jersey and took photos.

At the end of Prohibition, Louis "Red" Deutsch founded The Tube Bar in Jersey City, in 1933, naming his joint after the commuter train tunnels, or "tubes" that ran nearby. The establishment was simple and by some standards crude. The floor covered with sawdust, there were no tables, no food was served and only mixed drink customers were allowed at the bar. Beer drinkers were relegated to standing against a wall or convenient post. An instant hit with commuters looking for a quick drink before slogging off to work, the place did booming business until the early '70s, when a massive new train terminal opened nearby and customers became scarce. Rumor has it that Red sold the bar in 1980 and retired to Florida where the 93-year old barkeep died a peaceful death in 1983.

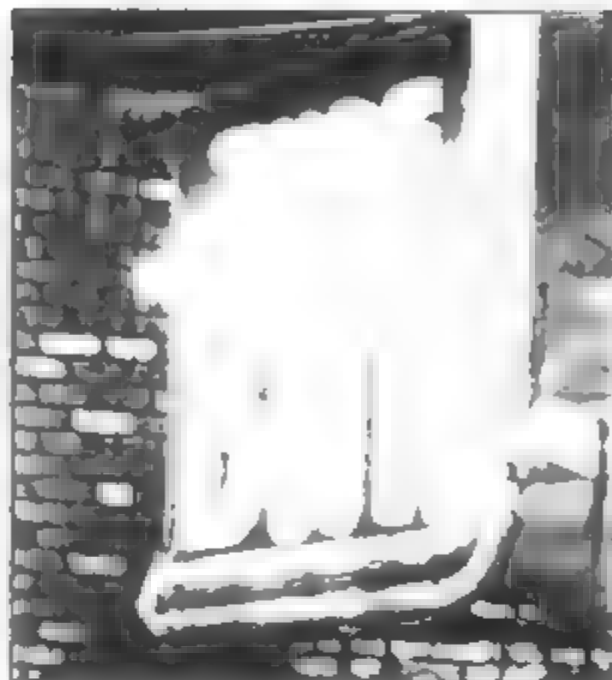
Red's voice gives the impression that he was one mean bastard, but that was only the half of it. According to one Tube Bar patron, Red was "tough, and he feared no one. He threw people out bodily on many occasions and I mean bodily. Red was a good person, but he didn't go for no shit."

Some anal retentive fans even dated the tape to 1978 because better recordings reveal a football score in the background that could be traced through sports history books. More and more information seems to slowly make it to the surface but no one really knows who made the tapes themselves.

After hearing the tape, I immediately wanted to make a film about The Tube Bar but it depended heavily on who would play the lead role of Red. Several months later I met Lawrence Tierney through a friend, Jeff Burr. I knew I had found my man. Larry is sort of a cross between Tex Johnson and Curly Joe of the Three Stooges, but has a personality all his own. After torturously long phone calls, lunches and meetings with Larry, he finally agreed to do the film. If I was to bring Red to the screen, it wasn't going to be some lame retelling of the calls with a stupid story no one cares about. I opted for a character study of Red, with sex, violence and the use of the actual recordings. Time and video sales will tell if I succeeded.

No one knows who made the original prank calls, but if I could shake their hands I would. **BYG**

—Christian Gore



The infamous tap room.

often inspire brilliance.

Looking back on his own directorial performance, Gore now remarks, "I was pretty disappointed by that part of the experience. I didn't get a chance to do any of the cool or fun stuff I wanted to do because I was too concerned with just keeping Larry from walking off the set or killing someone, with keeping the film, and the crew, alive."

Ironically, for all of our worrying, Tierney's well documented legal problems and violent tendencies failed to manifest themselves until after the shoot was over. Currently, the easily excited actor is facing serious charges for drunkenly discharging a firearm in his Hollywood apartment. While that may sound innocent enough to some, the nearly ventilated family in the adjacent dwelling found the event to be no laughing matter. Neither did Tierney's targets, namely Michael Tierney, his nephew, and an unidentified friend.

Tierney, who was chastised by his agent for taking the role of Red or (gasp!) even participating in the film, refused to be interviewed for this story. Press shy after being (as he sees it) humiliated in the pages of *Psychotronic* issue #8, wherein his arrest record was found to be longer than his filmography (and more prestigious), the actor responded to my inquiries by repeating "Where is Chris Gore? I want to talk to Chris Gore! I don't have nothing to say until I see the film!"

I suspect that Tierney, in light of his recently revived career (catch him in *City of Hope* and the upcoming *Reservoir Dogs*), is sorry he ever consented to star in *Red*, and that he's concerned that any "negative" publicity (such as this article) would hurt his chances of continuing this trend.

Obviously, we hope it won't.

During the second half of the day, we shot a pool side sequence which visualized Red's fantasies of becoming a millionaire and having two seriously stacked babes rub their judiciously oiled bodies all over his anticipating frame.

Much to Tierney's amusement, the scene was difficult to shoot, requiring take after take of the girls caressing his bald head with their barely covered



Erica and Hope giggle as Tierney glumly takes direction from Gore. Pal/actor John Berado looks on.

breasts. The ladies, who I suspect had participated in similar activities during other (perhaps more professional) shoots, held their own against Larry. He grabbed their asses, they buried him in cleavage. He gnawed at their thighs, they stroked his...well, enough said. Let's just say we got the shots.

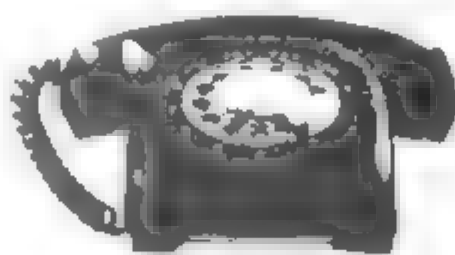
Exhausted, we planned for the next day—the bar shoot—which, from a technical point of view, was going to be a living hell.

While producer Jonathan Hommel had managed to weasel the use of an actual bar, the aforementioned Local Pub, we were faced with the sad fact that we could not close the place down for shooting and would have little or no control over the customers or bartender. But we got it for our favorite price—FREE!

Arriving at the location at the crack of dawn, I found myself staring at what looked to be a combination of your average redneck watering hole and the divine inspiration of Charles Bukowski. What a fucking dive.

However, as proof of the bar's popularity, there were already customers there, waiting at the door like whimpering dogs looking for table scraps.

Walking through the place, my right hand man Justin Stanley muttered the memorable words, "What the fuck are we going to do now?" I wasn't sure.



"You've used guns before, right Larry?"

—CHRISTIAN GORE

Dark and dank, the bar was a lighting nightmare, but the fact that our entire light kit consisted of just three 10K spots didn't help. For those of you out of the know, having a 10K light within fifteen feet of you is like standing fifteen feet from the sun.

First you feel hot, then you burn, then you melt.

Five hours later, after our considerable screwing with the lights and getting some atmospheric shots, Tierney arrived, ready for action.

Unlike the previous day, he looked rested and actually remembered my name on occasion, as opposed to calling me "kid."

Within the next ten hours we managed to shoot much of our scene, including some spellbinding footage of Tierney savagely wielding and ultimately making

good use of, a sawed-off, double-barreled shotgun.

Although Tierney had read the script, even he was shocked when Gore produced the weapon from its deceptively small case.

"You've used guns before, right Larry?" Gore asked with a smile as he loaded it with blanks.

Weapon in hand, Tierney worked the scene; blasting off round after round from the double triggered hog's leg. Larry was incredible, but down

INSPIRED BY RED

While the Red tapes may be new to many, they have long inspired many others, often affecting them to a disturbing degree.

Scott Ian, the guitarist for the innovative metal group ANTHRAX, is probably the best example of this malady.

"We actually got a copy of the tape a few years back," says Ian, "From the guitar player in SUICIDAL TENDENCIES, Rocky. So we were just playing it constantly, over and over again on the tour bus, just learning all the lines and talking about it. Everywhere we went we were reciting lines from the tape and this rep from our record company happened to be in Dallas with us and he overheard us reciting lines, and he said, 'Are you guys talking about Red?' And we said yeah, so he pulls it out of a bag and said 'I got that tape.' We couldn't believe it! Then we find out that this guy from Island records had had the tape for seven years already! So that was when I really started to delve into the story behind this thing to find out exactly how the tape came about and who did it."

ANTHRAX as a unit proved their devotion by sampling the Red tape and slipping it into the 1991 remix of their metal-meets-rap track "I'm The Man," which can be found on their "Attack of The Killer B's" album. As an individual, Ian confirmed his insanity by sitting in front of a typewriter and transcribing the entire tape. "At the time, we were constantly, constantly listening to it, so I just thought it would be cool to actually transcribe every single thing in it," said Ian. "I just thought it would be cool to be able to read it along with the tape."

Ian then excitedly asked, "Have you spoken to Matt Groening [creator of *The Simpsons*] yet?"

Like other die hard Red fans, Ian pegged Bart Simpson's phone pranks to Moe, the sullen bartender, as Red-inspired lunacy. However, Groening denies this suspicion. His publicist explained, "Matt says he's never heard of this Red tape and that the prank calls were invented by the show's writers. Otherwise, the tape would have been credited. So I guess you won't be interviewing Mr. Groening."

Sadly, we couldn't get to the writers before our press time.

However, one source recalls a certain party he attended several months ago, during which the Red tape was played. Most weren't interested, but a certain belly-laughing contingency of party goers were fascinated, splicing the tape off to a quiet corner for a careful listening. When our source questioned their identity, the reply was "Oh, I think they work on *The Simpsons*."

The cocksuckers. **[TV-14]**



Inspired by Red? NOT!

—David E. Williams

deep, we were all scared that he would suddenly go off the edge and turn the prop on us. One particular shot, one I'll never forget, had him firing both barrels directly over the camera.

Squinting through the lens, I felt the sweat run down my neck as I readied for the twin blasts. I imagined ambulances and doctors muttering, "he never felt a thing," but after the smoke cleared I found myself no worse for wear aside from some temporary deafness.

My recollection of the final day of shooting is a blur of light, sound and greasy pizza; culminating in the last take of the last shot requiring Tierney's presence. Although he too was tired, Larry kept asking for retakes because he felt his performance could be improved. The scene, played opposite Scott Spiegel (the screenwriter behind *Evil Dead II* and *The Rookie*), was the one in which Red faced his supposed telephonic tormentor. Unhappy with his lines, Tierney repeatedly asked for changes, fighting Gore over each and every word. Finally, camera and sound rolled on what was to be the final take. Hitting each cue perfectly, Larry was flawless. Upon director Gore's shouting "Cut!", the audience, consisting of crewmembers, barflies, and local losers, gave Larry a standing ovation—quite an achievement considering the group's general disposition. Grateful, Larry smiled, which he had not done during the previous seventy-odd hours. He was a star.

At that point, I knew there was nothing to worry about, the film was in the can.

Gore's friend John Berado, the one who infected us all with this obsession, looks at his own Red fascination this way:

"Like many long-time fans, I don't listen to the actual tape like I used to. Instead, I look for traces of Red in others. I listen for people doing Red impressions or playing the tape. Every once in a while, I'll be walking down the street, talking about Red and feel a tap on my shoulder, only to find someone saying, 'Hey I've heard that!' I believe Red is everywhere."

Amen. **[TV-14]**

RED

IN HIS OWN

@\$%*#

WORDS

An appreciation by Scott Ian

RED. TO HEAR HIM is to love him. To hear him is to be obsessed by him. Once you've been exposed to this tape you will never forget it. The phrases, the incredible use of profanity, the sheer hatred in Red's voice, the humor in the unknown voices. These things will become ingrained upon your memory. You'll find yourself repeating lines. You'll find yourself imitating Red for your answering machine. You'll find yourself saying, "How are you?" at odd moments and you'll be swearing ten times as much as you used to, ya motherfucker. These guys wind Red up so badly you can hear the blood boiling in the veins that are standing out on Red's forehead. You can feel him lose control. Supposedly, years after the tape was made a guy went into the bar and told Red that he was the guy that called. Red pulled a gun and had to be talked out of shooting the guy. He really would have put two zigs on both cheeks if he ever caught them. He never did though. Red retired to Florida and died years ago. I'm still trying to find out who were the guys behind the voices. They are my heroes, the cocksuckers.

(Ring)

RED: Hello

VOICE: Hello, is Mike Hunt there?

RED: Mike Unt?

VOICE: Hunt, H-U-N-T, Hunt
(Red screams out to the bar)

RED: Anybody named Hunt? Mike Hunt? *(pause)*, *(noise from bar)*

Anybody's name Hunt? No, nobody by that name

VOICE: How about, uh, could you, could ya call out Joe Mama?

RED: Joe Miller?

VOICE: No, Mama, M-A-M-A, Ma, Mama. He's an Italian guy

RED: Mana?

VOICE: Mama

RED: M-A-N-A?

VOICE: Yeah, Joe Mama

(Red screams out to the bar)

RED: Joe Mana. *(pause)* Joe Mana here?

VOICE: *(suppressed laughter)*

RED: No, there's nobody by that name either

VOICE: Oh, okay thanks a lot, bye-bye

(Phone hangs up)

(Ring), *(Ring)*

RED: Hello

VOICE: Yeah, uh, this the Tube Bar?

RED: Yeah

VOICE: Can I speak to Ben please?

(Red screams out to the bar)

RED: Anybody named Ben?

(pause) BEN! Anybody name Ben?

MAN IN BAR: Is Ben here?

RED: Nobody by that name

VOICE: The last name is, uh, he's an Italian fellow, uh DeBanana

RED: Who?

VOICE: DeBonano, DeBanana

(Red screams out to the bar)

RED: DeBanana! *(pause)*

DeBanana. *(laughs from the bar)*

Nobody by that name



VOICE: Ben DeBanana, no?

RED: No

VOICE: O K., thank you
(phone hangs up)

(Rings), *(Ring)*, *(Ring)*, *(Ring)*

(laughing over the rings)

RED: Yeah

VOICE: Hello

RED: Yeah

VOICE: Phil De Grave there?
(pause)

RED: Listen, ya motherfucker, cocksucker ya

VOICE: Ya, cunt

RED: Your mother is a fucker, she's a cunt, ya, and you're a

VOICE: I'm a, I'm afraid I'm gonna kill you

RED: Why don't you suck your mother's cunt you son of a bitch

VOICE: I'm gonna throw ya, I'll beat the shit out of you, you bastard

RED: You're a cock..., why ya lousy son of a bitch, I'll give you five hundred dollars to come fill my pitchers

VOICE: You just wait 'til I get a hold of you

RED: Why you fuckin' bum. I know who you are

VOICE: Yeah?

RED: And God help you when I see you

VOICE: I can't wait to get a hold of you, you bastard

RED: When I catch you I'll put two Z's. I'll put two zigs on your both cheeks. You'll remember it from... yes, I know ya, don't worry

VOICE: Yeah

RED: I know you and I'll get ya

VOICE: Sure you do you fuckin' fat pig

RED: Why you cocksucker, come, why don't you come over, tell me where to meet ya

VOICE: I, I, I'll come over, I'll come over

RED: I'll come over and meet you

you motherfucker bum
(Red hangs up)



VOICE: Yeah you wouldn't have the guts

(Ring), *(Ring)*

RED: Yeahhhhhh?

HIGH VOICE: Where's my father?

RED: Heh?

HIGH VOICE: Where's my father?

RED: Your father is in his, in your mother's asshole

HIGH VOICE: Yeah?

RED: Ya fuckin' bum.

(Red hangs up)

(Ring)

RED: Hello

VOICE: Yeah, I'm gonna break your fuckin' face open for ya, you son of a bitch.

RED: You know I

VOICE: Ya can't talk to me that way

RED: Ya know your mother sucked my prick the other day.

VOICE: Yeah?

RED: You know that?

VOICE: Yeah, well

RED: Now you can come down and suck mine too

VOICE: Yeah, when I come down I'll chop it off for ya.

RED: I wish ya would come down ya motherfucker

VOICE: Yeah

(Red hangs up)

(Ring)

RED: Hello

VOICE: Yeah, listen, I had it with you, you son of a bitch. Where do you wanna meet me and fuckin' have it out?

RED: Why you yellow rat bastard, ya motherfucker cocksucker.

VOICE: Yeah, you're

RED: I, I been fuckin', your mother's been suckin' my prick every, for many years and you're tryin' to make a jerk outta me

VOICE: Yeah?

RED: Why don't ya come over and



meet me face to face?
 VOICE: Your, my friend just walked into the bar
 RED: Ya motherfucker...I'll walk over and meet you wherever you want meeting
 VOICE: I want, that's what I want, that's what I want
 RED: Where are you and I'll come right over
 VOICE: You son of a bitch.
 RED: You, you son of a bitch, ya motherfucker
 VOICE: You wouldn't come
 RED: I wouldn't come
 VOICE: I'll come down there
 RED: You son of a bitch I'll cut
 VOICE: My friend's in the bar right now...
 RED: I'll, I'll cut your belly open. C'mon over you son of a bitch
 VOICE: My friend's there right now.
 RED: Ya bastard I'll ..
 VOICE: Why don't ya talk to him ya yellow bastard?
 RED: Why you lousy motherfucker cocksucker You'd fuck your own mother for a nickel ya son of a bitch You're a motherfucker and a cocksucker
 VOICE: You son of a bitch
(Red hangs up)
 VOICE: Nobody can talk to me that way.

(Ring)
 VOICE: Hello.
 RED: Yeah
 VOICE: Yeah, I just wanna tell ya, we dug your mudder up and fucked her, her skeleton.
 RED: Eh, come on over ya yellow son of a bitch, ya motherfucker
 VOICE: Ya ain't got the balls
 RED: Come on over here and I'll give ya balls, I'll cut 'em off for ya
 VOICE: Yeah, sure ya will, sure ya will
 RED: Ya suck a, ya suck a cunt you son of a bitch
(Red hangs up)

VOICE: Ya cocksucker you
(Ring)
 MAN IN BAR: Tube Bar
 VOICE: Hello, Red there?
 MAN IN BAR: Who's this calling?
 VOICE: Jackie
 MAN IN BAR: Jackie?
 VOICE: Yeah, Parker
 MAN IN BAR: *(to Red)* Jackie
 RED: Hello
 VOICE: Hello Red
 RED: Yeah
 VOICE: Is Stuey there?
 RED: Who?
 VOICE: Stu
 RED: What Stu?
 VOICE: Pit
 RED: Heh'

"Why don't you come over here and say that face ta face ya @&\$*#¢ bum!?"

VOICE: Pit P-E-I-T
 RED: Stupid!
 VOICE: Hahaha, yeah!
 RED: Why you motherfucker, ya cocksucker
 VOICE: Ha
 RED: Why don't ya come down here ya cocksucker?
 VOICE: I'm gonna fuck you up
 RED: I'll cut yer belly open ya
 VOICE: Haaa, ya cocksucka
 RED: You fuckin' mother's cunt
 VOICE: I'll fuck ya mother
 RED: Why don't ya go out and fuck ya mother ya son of a bitch, ya...
 VOICE: I'll chase ya around ya cocksucker
 RED: Ya lousy yellow bastard
(Red hangs up)
 VOICE: I'm comin' down

(Ring)
 RED: Hello

VOICE: Yeah, listen. Who you think you are fightin' like that on the phone? What the hell I, I ask ya for a fuckin' name and you, and ya start screamin' and yellin'.
 RED: Why don't you come over here and say that ta, face ta face ya motherfucker bum'
 VOICE: What, all I asked you for is a name? What are you yelling at me for?
 RED: Why don't you come over and face to face and I'll tell you right away? You just tell me you're the guy that calls.
 VOICE: All I did was ca...
 RED: Why don't you tell me where you are and I'll come over ta see you, you

VOICE: All I did was call you up What are you talkin' about?
 RED: Why don't you tell me? I'll come over and see you where you are
 VOICE: I'll come over there, I'll stab you, you motherfucker.
 RED: Oh, I'll, why don't you tell me where you are I'll come over?
 VOICE: Ya see, you ain't got the guts ta fuckin' fight me
 RED: I ain't got the guts?
 VOICE: Ta fight me
 RED: Why don't ya tell me what, uh, where are ya, and I'll come right over?
 VOICE: Yeah
 RED: So, they told me who you are. So I know
 VOICE: All right, who am I?
 RED: So, I know who you are
 VOICE: Yeah
 RED: So just wait until I catch up with you

VOICE: You know what, you're a stupid cunt
 RED: When I, when I'll catch up with you
 VOICE: You fag
 RED: Then you'll find out how those...Z
 VOICE: Z. *(mocking Red)*
 RED: Ya know how you make a Z? On both cheeks you'll have it
 VOICE: FUCK YOU
 RED: Ya motherfucker bum
(Phone hangs up)

(Ring), (Ring)
 RED: Hello.
 VOICE: Yes, I wanna speak ta Stu
 Pit
 RED: Why you motherfucker you son of a bitch
 VOICE: You son of a bitch Who is this?
 RED: Why don't you come down here?
 VOICE: I'll come down.
 RED: Stand up to me ya dirty cocksucker
 VOICE: Yeah
 RED: My name is Red
 VOICE: Yeah, yeah sure
 RED: C'mon down here face ta face you bastard
 VOICE: Yeah fuckin'
 RED: I'll put...I'll cut ya belly open
 VOICE: You're the biggest punk in the world. **BTG**

Scott Ian is of course the guitarist for Anthrax and we thank him for supplying us with this transcript. On a sad note, however, Red star Lawrence Tierney has suffered several minor strokes in the time since the film was finished—as well as spent time in jail for brawling, firearms infractions and the general rampant hostility that made us initially believe he was born to play our favorite bartender.

**UFO'S ARE
REAL**

**JFK IS
DEAD**

**THE CIA CONTROLS
YOU!**

While his most recent film is the media-thief gem **SONIC OUTLAWS**, Craig Baldwin made his first impression on us with another classic.

TRIBULATION 99:

THE FILMMAKER MUST BE PARANOID

Conspiracy theories converge (and actually make sense) as San Francisco filmmaker CRAIG BALDWIN's found-footage masterpiece hits the screen.

Interview by David E. Williams

AS MOST PEOPLE know, ranting and raving socio-political documentaries will seldom hold an average filmgoer's attention for more than an eye blink. However, ranting and raving socio-political black comedy will. Thusly, filmmaker Craig Baldwin wisely, and very shrewdly, concealed his leftist leaning and agit-prop ideals with absurd fun in his latest film *Tribulation 99: Alien Anomalies Under America*.

Composed of a rapid fire barrage of clips from B movies, military training films, speculative documentaries, TV news footage and other famous images, the film is broken down into 99 breathy narrative rants that explain not only the history of the world as we've been duped into believing, but the history that's been concealed: covered-up extraterrestrial encounters, covert CIA operations and big business' manipulations of small Central American governments. Yes, it's a history of those who believe JFK must have been assassinated by an ET-controlled android "as no lone human being could have possibly hit a distant moving target two times within 1.8 seconds."

As the programmer for The Other Cinema, San Francisco's premiere unusual film venue, Baldwin recognizes that *Trib 99* is as much a reac-



El Sicodellico was one: an alien so mutated by radiation that it must mate with snakes in order to perpetuate itself.

tion to popular cinema as it is to his own outrage over U.S. imperialism in the Western Hemisphere. But for all his seriousness, he knows how to tell a good joke. And while not everyone will laugh about the war in El Salvador or the destruction of the Brazilian rain forests—though some of us will—*Tribulation 99* is the rare film that will work on both levels.

I'm pretty uninterested in the dry, long-winded political documentaries that you see on PBS. But in Trib 99, you covered the

same territory with humor, which makes it much more effective.

But some people take it less seriously, so it won't get into certain venues. For instance, documentary festivals. But this humor thing, irony, bitter sarcasm, black comedy, works better with younger audiences who are more into rock n' roll or pop culture. Among historians, they keep it at a distance and don't get the joke. I find a lot of documentaries dry, but I wouldn't put them down, I don't think that sort of filmmaking should be eliminated. But there should be a lot of different kinds of documentary films and mine is one that is very sorely needed because of this visual literacy and this kind of pop culture generation that we're a part of.

Some older styles, the Leftist liberal moralistic films, just try to promote

political action with guilt. Not that that doesn't work, but there are other ways of doing it, like with humor. There are a lot of different audiences out there and any film can find it's own audience, so I don't feel like 'I'm pushed over into the art film ghetto.' That's just sour grapes. I don't want to be in the mainstream, it would be nice, but the film wasn't made with the purpose of being on TV. So I wanted the film to speak with the language of the people I hang out with, my generation.



TOP: Grisly cattle mutilations abound, though human dupes claim it's to stop the fast food ranching that daily destroys 50,000 rainforest acres. **BOTTOM:** Cuban patriot Luis Posada suspects that Fidel Castro's less than picturesque appearances bode ill for Havana's booming gambling industry.



*It's definitely tuned in to a more media literate audience, like Michael Moore's **Roger & Me**.*

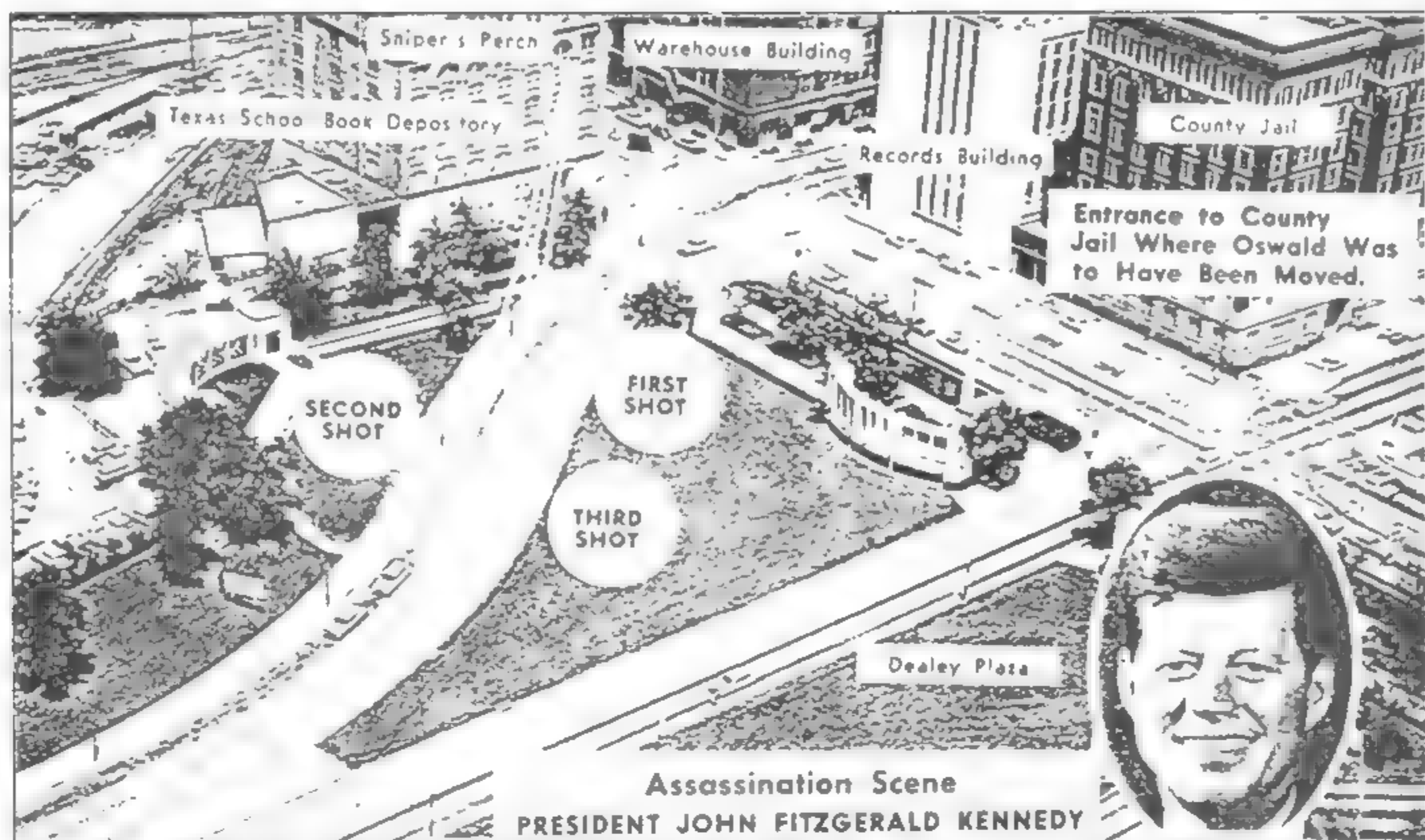
Right. That had the humor and the found footage and the kind of personal point of view. It's just an idea who's time has come. We've seen so much television and heard so much radio that they can be parodied, we understand the formulas and we know how they can be busted and broken.

What exactly is your theory of cinema povera?

The fact that I'm broke! When you see that Hollywood is so fat, so wasteful and so bloated and that their ideas are so thin and so mediocre—I've long ago stopped being impressed by slick special effects—because you know that any bit of originality or quality is just a question of how many dollars they spend. *Terminator 2* for instance. Of course it looks great! They just bought the best people in the world with the best equipment to make that 5 second scene. That's not really a measure of value or quality anymore. Movies to me should go against that system and be ingenious as opposed to expensive. Make the most of what you've got, turn something that's stupid or dumb upside down, subvert it and make it a mark of imagination.

*Trib 99 reminded me of Woody Allen's **What's Up Tigerlily?**, in that it recycles images, turning shit into gold.*

And you can enjoy it in a sort of campy way because it's exploded, parodied, and we can see the formula nature of it. Then you can use that as a foundation for some further comedy. So all of a sudden you have like three levels of material going at the same time. I stole a film from the U.S. Army called *Know Your Enemy*, which was actually, basically made up of footage that they had stolen from the Vietnamese. So here was a film that was very crude, shot with a hand-held 16mm camera by the Viet Cong that somehow found it's way back to the Armed Services Motion Picture



His assassination must have been by an android like Oswald since no lone human being could possibly hit a distant moving target two times within 1.8 seconds.

Department and turned around into a U.S. propaganda film. [Laughs] So I took that and turned that around into my own thing. So it was like a found film that was found, refound and then refound.

And the jokes go both ways.

Right, you don't feel sacrosanct or smug about being morally superior. I mean, the CIA is fucked, but you don't just wag your finger say, 'Oh, well, tsk, tsk' or that kind of thing. You're outraged, you want to express it, not in a passive way, but in an active way. You try to do something with your anger and outrage. If you really watch the film, you'll see it's a history. That it really just moves through the years from post-war to present day, as the CIA moved through these countries—Guatemala, Cuba, Chile, Granada, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Panama. They did a lot of other shit in other parts of the world, that's for

sure, but I wanted to concentrate on Latin America.

Which is natural because those countries have always been connected with weirdness, the Bermuda Triangle, the Mayans, etc. They already have a mystical history.

incredible amount of footage in my collection that I just want to be seen. I mean, I love flying saucer footage! I make loops and watch it all the time, all night sometimes!

What parts get the biggest laughs?

**"I love flying saucer footage!
I make loops and watch it
all the time, all night!"**

Well, that gets into the whole network of the manipulation. I wanted to do something about Granada, so that became the voodoo thing, Castro brought about the whole James Bond connection. So you have to read through the mystical stories to get to the truth. I tried to disguise or masquerade each of the exposés within a kind of a comedic fantasy or myth that would be appropriate for the circumstances. But what really drove some of the segments depended somewhat on what footage I had to work with or what I really wanted to use. I have an

People seem to respond best to the stuff about Castro because of the assassination attempts, which the audience really plugs into. It's outrageous when you think about it, so people really crack up. Toward the end, I don't know, it moves faster, it's more streamlined. There's some irony at the end there...but the earlier parts of the film rely more heavily on the horror movies of the 50s where you see the monsters and such, which people can more easily identify and laugh at.

Up through the Kennedy assassination is very funny because those events have reached such a mythological level. All that stuff is pure history now and ripe for parody.

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Pancho Villa's cranium is held by Yale's Skull And Bones Society,
George Bush's fraternity.

The more modern stuff you've read about in newspapers—'Oh, yeah, I saw that Panama stuff on CNN.' But when you say the word 'Kennedy,' it's like this kind of fantasy. Which is exactly what the film is trying to do: explore myths and paranoid visions versus real history to see how they blend in together. Everything that has been broadcast as 'news' on TV is fantasy anyways, the way it's totally constructed and manipulated by the powers that be. It all just a bunch of racist, paranoid visions that are projected in the form of news.

Are you just preaching to the converted or do you find your film reaches other audiences?

It's less of a problem for me than other political filmmakers. But it is a problem. You get people who agree with you on every point and pat themselves on the back for being right. But the film is experimental on a lot of levels including the basis of creating a new audience for this kind of subject matter and humor. The film too is not so precious that it can only play in art theatres, but it could also play in bars, anywhere there are people. It's supposed to be popular. It hasn't been as successful as *Roger & Me*, but for something essentially made in my garage, it has managed to reach out to

a wide audience, even the damaged, *Psychotronic*, rock n' roll type audience. [Laughs] My motivation is that I'm totally against this preciousness of art, which I think has driven a lot of people screaming from the galleries. First of all, a lot of artists are totally egotistical, which I think is stupid, but it's basically a reflection of their suburban background. As if, instead of being a Yuppie banker they decided to be an artist. It's just a career move for them! That's fucked up. The idea should be that you want to interact with people, be current and be a part of what's going on. And with my film, there's so much imagery in there that's popular or public anyway that I could hardly lay exclusive claim to it. So the proper place for it is in a public venue. I'm just not interested in this mystique where you must go to such and such a point at midnight to see my films. That's cult! I like an audience whether it be five or fifty-five. It's okay if people laugh, if things are seen in circumstances under which are not completely, absolutely under my control. A lot of these artists are little crypto-fascists who want to totally create only one situation so their work can be shown. Which is fine, and a lot of people do that, but I think things move much too quickly in reality, in this day and age for that. [TVG]

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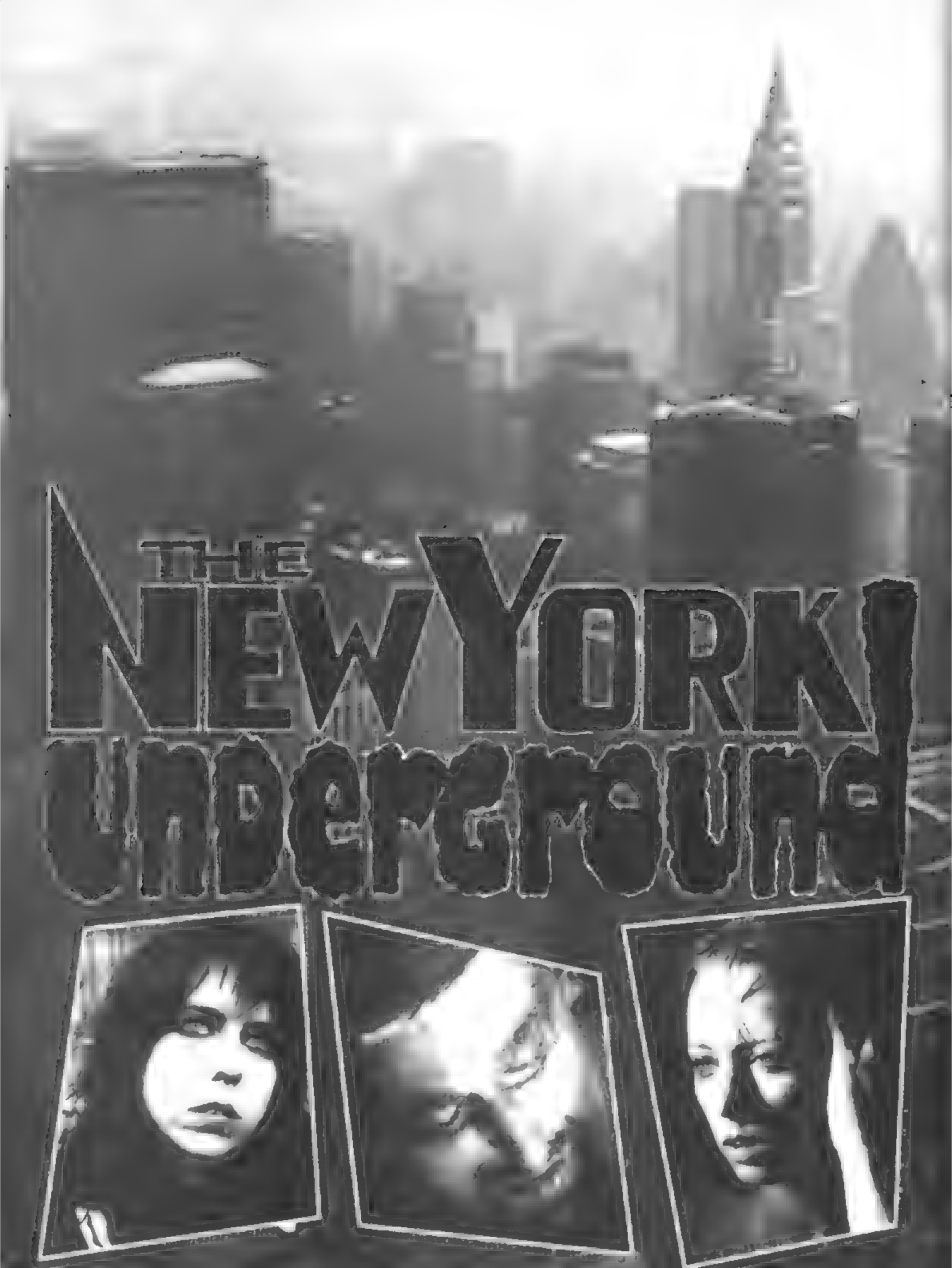
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THE NEW YORK! UNDERGROUND



IT'S NOT DEAD, IT JUST SMELLS BAD

By Tessa Hughes-Freeland and David E. Williams

A CERTAIN ABREED OF post-punk ideology was rife in New York City in the 1980s. Synthesized with graffiti, rap, vestigial '70s disco and the still flailing entrails of '60s psychedelia, it gave way to a curious cultural climate.

There was a sense of community and an active subculture that pre-existed the supposed birth of the East Village. Illegal immigrants, pimps, prostitutes, drug dealers, addicts, poets, Satanists, writers, musicians, painters and performers all lived side by side in an area where anger and violence prevailed—creating a hotbed of co-existent crime and creativity. Nobody really had jobs or needed

Opposite: Laura Jessen in *WE ARE NOT TO BLAME*, the late Jack Smith in *BUBBLE PEOPLE* and Amy Turner in *SUBMIT TO ME*.



Tommy Turner nods out in Richard Kern's *SUBMIT TO ME*.

them—selling a few drugs, stripping for a couple of nights, turning a trick or driving a cab was enough to get by. Super 8 film was cheap and cameras easily available, which opened up the possibility for anybody to make films that had absolutely nothing to do with Hollywood—save for a type of genre exploitation or image plundering which served to make a personal statement. Next to having fun, an outlet

for self expression was the most important thing for a whole slew of young people living in an urban jungle. For anybody working with film, the subject and content of what they did with it became an extension of a lifestyle. They blended the outrageousness of Andy Warhol's Factory environment with drug-driven punk nihilism and paved the way for experimentation of all kinds.

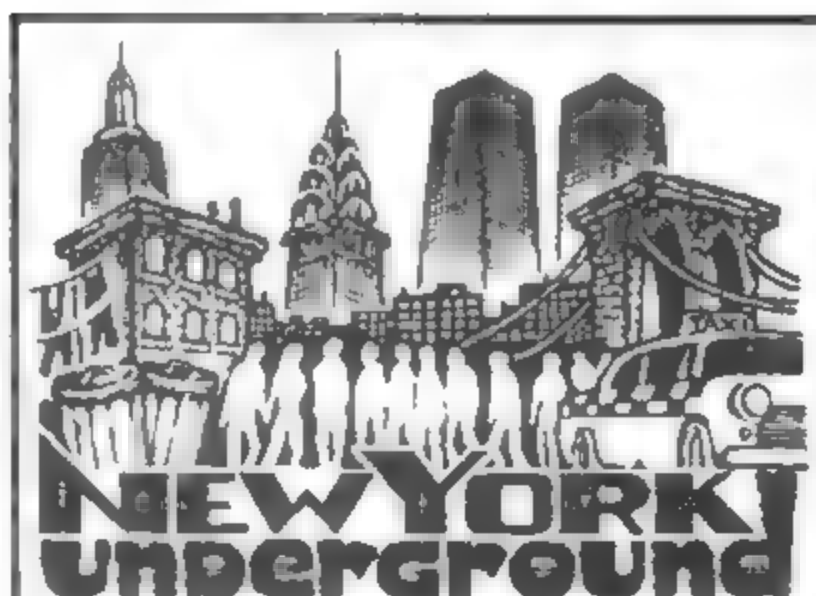
A relationship between filmmakers, musicians and performers developed mainly because they hung out together. The punk scene of 1977 and '78 was totally anti-art and anti-acceptance as bands like Suicide, DNA, Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, The Contortions, and Richard Hell and the Voidoids rocked the New York clubs. It was there, rather than in cinemas or alternative spaces, where the likes of Eric Mitchell (*Underground USA*), Amos Poe (*Unmade Beds*), James Nares (*Rome '78*), Beth and Scott B. (*Black Box*) and Vivienne Dick (*Beauty Becomes The Beast*) not only found their actors, but showed their films. They made Super 8 superstars out of the likes of Lydia Lunch, Jennifer Miro and Arto Lindsay—becoming the *Village Voice*-labeled "New Cinema" and laying the groundwork for what was to come.

MR. KERN GOES TO NEW YORK

Fueled by a plentiful supply of talent, time and a seemingly inexhaustible array of marginal characters ready and willing to do just about anything in the name of celluloid glamour, Richard Kern's life in the mid-80s was wild. A tall, lean and good looking guy with a rampantly vivid imagination, Kern hardly ever left his house, except on occasion to buy cheeseburgers. Nowadays, a complete vegetarian, he goes out to buy health food or travel to another country to tour his films, using his newly appropriated Ivy League look as a suitable disguise.

But then, the North Carolina native was into something few creatures understood: a barefaced parody of human extremes tangible to those possessed of a certain twist of mind or like inclination. Kern was exploring the raw meat of human nature. He made no bones about it, and his Bible-belt upbringing left him plenty to explore.

With his experience in photography and publishing fanzines with self-effacing titles like *Dumbfucker* and *Valium Addict*, Kern's sharp eye, menacing vision and incisive wit produced



• R. KERN •

REAL NAME: Richard Maurice Kern

BIRTHPLACE: Roanoke Rapids, NC

AGE: 38

BEST FILMS: *The Right Side Of My Brain*, *Fingered*, *The Evil Cameraman*

QUOTE: "My ultimate sex fantasy is the kind of girl I can have a normal sexual relationship with, talk to over coffee in the morning and not feel embarrassed to walk down the street with."

CURRENTLY: Promoting the hell out of his new book and taking photos.

Tony Cole



films which not only let hell run loose, but also kept a finger on the pulse of a delinquent American psyche.

However unsettling, psychotic or distorted the content of Kern's films may be, his actors, or more often, actresses, never visually look bad. He

loves girls, and they love what he does for them. His technically proficient, inventive camerawork, imaginative lighting and fast paced editing contribute to the dynamic and compelling nature of his films. Working

exclusively in Super 8, Kern's narratives and characterizations are direct and concise.

In the early '80s he made *Goodbye 42nd Street* and *Zombie Hunger*, which both showed his interest in sex, drugs and violence. *Zombie Hunger* features a guy shooting up in a small room. He gets a rush, then suddenly jumps up and trashes the place. Kern also did a number of performances of "Blood Boy," an expanded cinema show that varied in content but usually involved partner Brian Moran naked, pouring blood over himself in Grand Guignol-style between acts of mock terrorism, interrogation and assassination. After one performance, an irate Italian tourist complained to the club about the blood stains on her expensive handbag, only to be told that she was lucky to have had such a good view.

An affiliation with punk music and attitude is an integral part of Kern's films. A story of sexual obsession, *Right Side of My Brain* (1984), was cowritten with Lydia Lunch and features Lunch, Henry Rollins, J.G. Thirlwell, Norman Westburg and others, with music by Foetus and Dream Syndicate. Dispensing with irrelevant subject matter, it focuses on one woman's pursuit of realizing dangerous sexual desires, a pastime close to the hearts of both Kern and Lunch.

Billed as "the sexual misadventures of a sexually insane girl," *Right Side* earned the reputation of being a sort of *Last Tango in the East Village* as Lunch's breathy narration revealed this about her fantasy lovers: "Once they realized I was willing to go further and further and get uglier and more disgusting no matter what their potential—no matter how far they would go, they would never go far enough."

Specializing in pairing down human relationships to their most basic elements, *Manhattan Love Suicides* (1985) ties together four short stories



Lydia Lunch and Sally Ven Yu get tight in *THE RIGHT SIDE OF MY BRAIN*. (1984)

"Yeah, I get loads of it man. I take my lessons from Zedd. I have 'em falling at my feet . . . not really."

—RICHARD KERN ON WHETHER BEING A FILMMAKER HELPED HIM GET LAD

stars as angry female driver in "Woman At The Wheel." Berated by boyfriends Gary Ray and Nick Zedd, and later confronted by a street gang, she becomes distracted by erotic visions and crashes headlong into a wall. In "Thrust In Me," Nick Zedd gives himself the blowjob of his life. "I Hate You Now" features Tommy and Amy Turner in a relationship of perverted fascination ending in self immolation.

Simultaneously horrific and hilariously, these stories have a cartoon-like quality in construction, as the characters interact in exaggerated behavior, appearance and expression. It is a

black-and-white film portraying a black-and-white world, complete with cheesy special effects.

The people Kern played and worked with were always close and his self-styled production company "Deathtrip" attracted people like a magnet. They were ready and willing to participate in and perform acts of erotic indulgence, humiliation, degradation, self-destruction and mutilation. *Submit To Me* (1985) and *Submit To Me Now* (1987) are, like a visual diary, a document of those who passed in front of Kern's camera. Kern himself describes the films as "documentaries of life in the East."

R. Kern

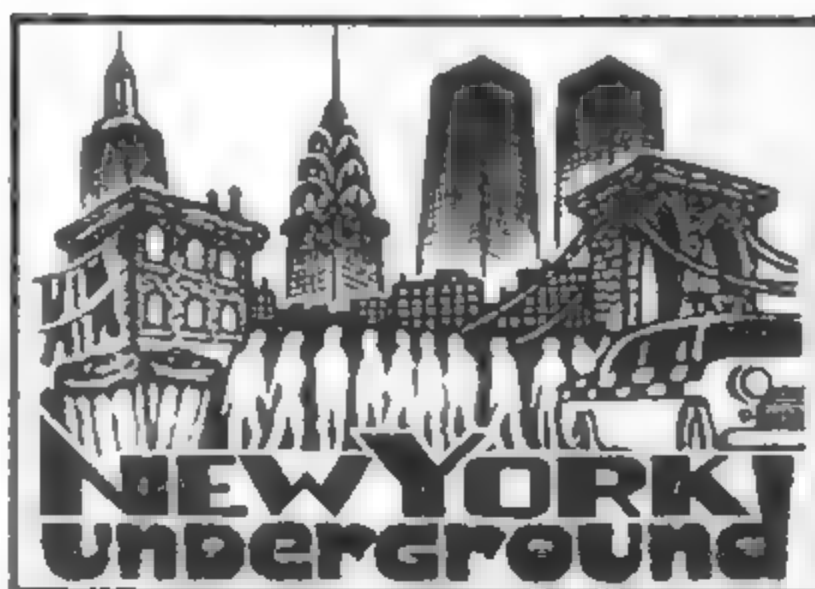
of seedy lives ending in suicide by different means. In "Stray Dogs," David Wojnarowicz acts as a semi-retarded goon who pesters an older artist (Bill Rice) for affection. Finally, he mutilates himself in frustration, squirming on the floor in agony as the artist continues to paint. Adrienne Altenhaus

WILL SHE OR WON'T SHE? Lydia Lunch cowrote and stars in Kern's *THE RIGHT SIDE OF MY BRAIN*, a horrific tale of one woman's sexual obsessions. Interestingly, it was this film that helped label Kern a misogynist.



Village, a collaboration with the people I made them about."

Devoid of backgrounds and storyline, the focus of *Submit To Me* is on individual acts; Lydia Lunch humps a cane, Audrey Rose and Casandra Stark dance together cheek to cheek, Pete Shore rips his throat out, Amy Turner wanders wet and bedraggled, Lung Leg plays with her salamander, Jim Thirlwell fondles himself, dances and rolls his eyes, Nick Zedd bounces off the walls in a straightjacket, and Tommy Turner is impaled by a blonde bitch with long wooden spears. These are the scenes that remain. A number of others were shot, but participants later changed



their minds about having these acts shown publically. These scenes are amongst the censored Kern films which, along with other atrocities, remain unseen by public eye.

In *Submit To Me* and *Submit To Me Now*, the cinematic emphasis is

on intrusive and authoritative camerawork, polychromatic lighting and kaleidoscopic editing—the result being an ocular assault of prurient *psychopornadelia*. The films are prefaced by an explanation that the characters portrayed were suggested to Kern by the actors themselves, either literally or subliminally.

These same actors collaborated on or starred in Kern's films with frequency. They were all people who hung out together, got fucked up, fucked each other or fucked each other up.

You Killed Me First (1985), was based on mixed autobiographical

PEOPLE LAUGHED AT FIRST

While ignored or ridiculed by many of the filmmakers it supposedly unified, this rally cry ultimately defined a movement.

THE CINEMA OF TRANSGRESSION MANIFESTO

We, who have violated the laws, commands and duties of the avant-garde; i.e., to bore, tranquilize and obfuscate through a fluke process dictated by practical convenience stand guilty as charged.

We openly renounce and reject the entrenched academic snobbery which erected a monument to laziness known as "structuralism" and proceeded to lock out those filmmakers who possessed the vision to see through this charade.

We refuse to take their easy approach to cinematic creativity; an approach which ruined the underground of the Sixties when the scourge of the film schools took over.

Legitimizing every mindless manifestation of sloppy moviemaking undertaken by a generation of misled film students emulating the failures of profoundly undeserving non-talents like Brakhage, Snow, Frampton, Gehr, Breer, etc.; the dreary media arts centers and geriatric cinema critics have totally ignored the exhilarating accomplishments of those in our rank—such underground "invisibles" as Zedd, Kern, Turner, Klemann, Delanda, Eros & Mare, and Direct Art Ltd.—a new generation of filmmakers daring to rip out of the stifling straightjackets of film theory in a direct attack on every value system known to man.

- We propose that all film schools be blown up and all boring films never be made again.
- We propose that a sense of humor is an essential ele-

ment discarded by the doddering academics and further, that any film which doesn't shock isn't worth looking at.

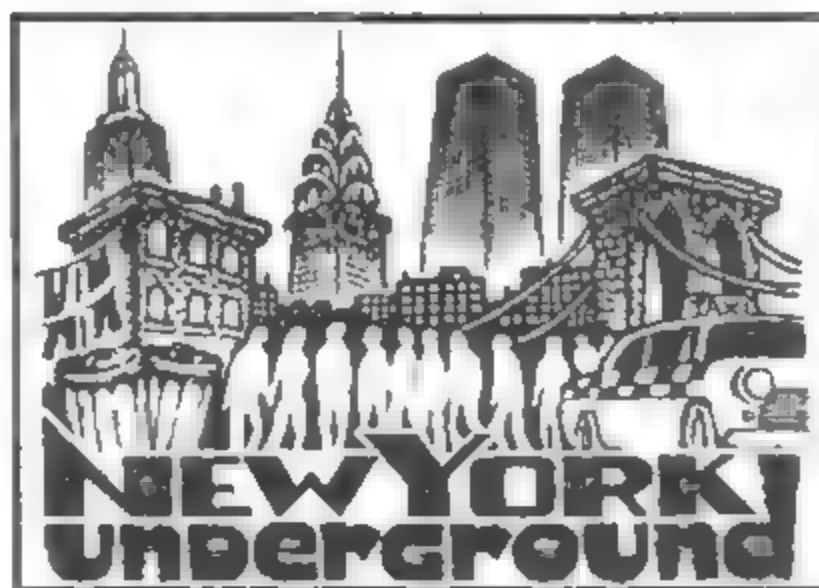
- All values must be challenged. Nothing is sacred. Everything must be questioned and reassessed in order to free our minds from the faith of tradition.
- Intellectual growth demands that risks be taken and changes occur in political, sexual and aesthetic alignments no matter who disapproves.
- We propose to go beyond all limits set or prescribed by taste, morality or any other traditional value system shackling the minds of men.
- We pass beyond and go over the boundaries of millimeters, screens and projectors to the state of expanded cinema.
- We violate the command and law that we bore audiences to death in rituals of circumlocution and propose to break all the taboos of our age by sinning as much as possible.
- There will be blood, shame, pain and ecstasy, the likes of which no one has yet imagined. None shall emerge unscathed.
- Since there is no afterlife, the only hell is the hell of praying, obeying laws and debasing yourself before authority figures. The only heaven is the heaven of fun, fucking, learning new things and breaking as many rules as you can.
- This act of courage is known as transgression.
- We propose transformation through transgression—to convert, transfigure and transmute into a higher plane of existence in order to approach freedom in a world full of unknowing slaves.

—Orion Jeriko (aka Nick Zedd) in *Underground Film Bulletin* #4, 1985

experiences of a number of Kern's friends. A nightmare of domestic suburbia, it was initially shown as part of a collaborative installation with David Wojnarowicz, who also acts as the father in the film. The display featured a massacred skeletal family lounged around a table while the television revealed the events leading up to the bloody aftermath.

You Killed Me First acutely manifests the alienation of a teen spirit as a young girl's (Lung Leg) vehemence towards her parent's (Wojnarowicz and Karen Finley) platitudes and her sister's self-righteousness drives her to shooting them at the dinner table.

Lydia Lunch and Richard Kern joined forces again in 1986 to make *Fingered*. Starring Lunch, Marty Nations, Lung Leg and Emilio Cubiero, *Fingered* dives in at the



deep end, hard and fast, and never comes up for air. Lunch stars as the unquenchable phone sex girl, forever thirsty for sexual adventure, provided it isn't with some dick who wants her to be his mother. She gets it on with a grungy macho gearhead (Nations) who, after offhandedly slitting someone's throat, drives her to the Snakepit, a kind of Spahn Ranch for grungy macho dudes only. After a highly charged sex scene with guns offloaded, they pick up a distressed young girl (Lung Leg) who the gearhead proceeds to attack with the aid of Ms. Lunch.

During the shooting of *Fingered*, Leg was kept away from the set and the other actors until it was time to film her scenes. She described in one interview that she was "neatly locked away in a virtual prison cell, having a wonderful time eating gobs of LSD."

The first time she met Marty was just before shooting the final rape scene, which Lunch helped her prepare for by asking that Lung imagine how she herself felt—as a former real-life sexual victim of Marty Nations.

Nations refers to his past relationship with Lunch as a "dress rehearsal" for the film

The Evil Cameraman

(1986-90) picks up where *Submit To Me Now* left off. Starring Kern himself, it involves an "underground" filmmaker subverting his actresses. A few years in absentia, there is a marked contrast between two phases as Kern's encounters with girls in the second half of the film become acts of persuasion rather than brutality. A few years ago, Kern tried to screen *The Evil Cameraman* at The Ritz. After the first 30 seconds of an extremely skin-



Lung Leg embodies alienated youth in *YOU KILLED ME FIRST*.

ny Jap Ann being tied to a ladder and her head wrapped in black cloth, the image disappeared from the screen and Kern was thrown out of the club followed with the owner's opinion that it was "kiddie porn."

Many critics and fans alike have focused on the blood and guts violence in Kern's films, rather than on the humor. But lately, the humor has come to the fore. In *X=Y* (1990), Kern addresses the question of violence on a societal level rather than in terms of personal obsessive self-destruction. Ironically, Kern himself is fascinated by girls with guns. At the end, Tomoya, a Japanese girl, offers a gun on a folded American flag

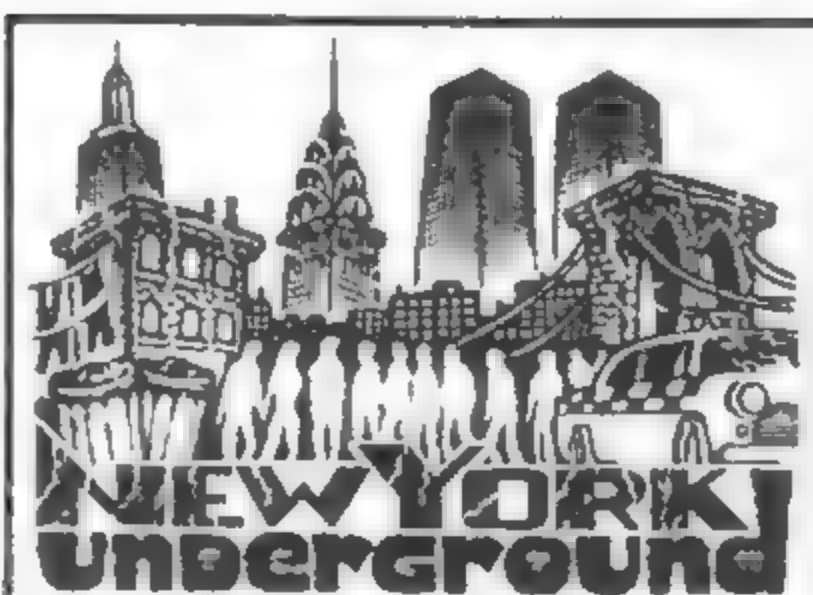


While many thought these films were expressions of sexual fantasies, for the actors, at least, they were the real thing. Annabelle Davies, Linda Serbu and Charles Pinion on the set of Kern's latest, *THE BITCHES*.

to the viewer. In *Catholic and Nazi* (1991) both a Catholic schoolgirl and a Nazi officer are revealed as strippers as Kern cracks through exterior preconceptions and makes fun of stereotypical labels.

Sex and fetishism prevail as Kern continues to explore generally considered taboo subjects. Nudity is pretty taboo in the 9 to 5 world, throwing the MPAA into NC-17 fits, but Kern celebrates the beauty of human sexuality in action. In *Tumble* (1991), the athletic eroticism of Linda Serbu's movement is doubled by his classic disorienting camerawork. He uses his camera like a subversive weapon penetrating exterior appearances and opens our eyes to the world of a fantastical reality. *Scooter and Jinx* (aka *Moneylove*) (1991) portrays a paid lesbian encounter. Money also appears in a transaction between filmmaker and actress in *The Evil Cameraman*. Perhaps this is a reflection of Kern's concern for the source of funding for his films.

One label which has been wrongly attributed to Kern himself is that of misogynist. Richard Kern is not a misogynist; he does *not* hate women.



• NICK ZEDD •

REAL NAME: James Harding
(aka Orion Jeriko, Nick Zodiac, Nicola Zedd)

BIRTHPLACE: Silver Spring, MD

AGE: 35+

BEST FILMS: *Police State*, *The Wild World Of Lydia Lunch*

QUOTE: "I know I won't be remembered, but you won't either."

QUIRK: Attracted to women with big butts.

CURRENTLY: Touring Europe on a Cinema of Transgression revival and finishing a new film.



Old Linebury

Not one person in any of his films has done something that they haven't wanted to do anyway. Ironically, it was probably the films that he and

Lydia have collaborated on that earned him this reputation. Curiously, in his most recent film, *The Bitches*, a kind of pornographic parody, the girls (Annabelle Davies and Linda Serbu) are on top and in control. So does this make men victims? One might ask their male costar, Charles Pinion.

Incredibly prolific, Kern is currently working on his 18th film. Again working with Lunch, the working title is *I Hate Fucking Movies*. Set in New Orleans, the story concerns a black cop who, while on the trail of a pornographer, meets Lydia, resulting in a bizarre sex triangle between she, her brother and his wife.

ZEDD EVOLUTION MADE EASY

Growing up in Maryland, James Harding was tortured by his schoolyard peers, his physical characteristics soon earning him the name "nigger lips." In early 1968, James was making Super 8 sci-fi monster movies with G.I. Joe dolls. A giant fly threatened earthlings with doom in *The Attack of the Giant Fly* and *Return of the Giant Fly*, but it wasn't until 1977 that he decided that filmmaking was more than a hobby—but an effective propaganda tool. In 1979, under the name Nick Zodiac, he was showing his Super 8 punk feature, *They Eat Scum*, in the clubs downtown. A simple yet critically maligned tale of East Village death rocker cannibals, its condemnation by the *Wall Street Journal* gave the film an official stamp of disapproval. By 1980, he had completed a probing pseudo-propaganda 16mm short called *The Bogus Man*, which he described as "an attempt to convince people to assassinate the president." His identity had fully



Zedd tangles with the Man (Willoughby Sharp) in *POLICE STATE*.

transformed into Nick Zedd.

Politically concerned from the start, an anarchic, inquiring character was at work. Acutely aware of the fragile nature of parody, *The Bogus Man*, and later his horror spoof *Geek Maggot Bingo* (1983), contain a pervading element of absurdity which pokes fun at the genre type that they allude to, while simultaneously exploiting it. Well versed in schlock, horror, B-movies, comic book culture and camp, the initial popiness of Zedd's imagery gives way to a kind of awkward decadence.

A shift occurred when Zedd travelled to Europe in a failed attempt to re-seduce estranged love-interest Lydia Lunch. The result was *The Wild World of Lydia Lunch* (1983), a very personal and

Atomique Films



Zedd (center) would later star in Alyce (at right) Wittenstien's sci-fi spoof *No Such Thing As Gravity*—as a lawyer!

emotionally expressive Super 8 portrait constructed from a "fuck you" tape Lunch had sent Zedd and some "home movie" footage he shot of her morbidly wandering about Ireland. Zedd claims to have made a quick \$1,000 by screening it at a club—revenge against her for dumping him after just three months.

Lunch countered by declaring the film was, "a piece of shit . . . just filming me walking around. It wasn't even meant to be a film."

In 1984, frustrated by the local press and lack of acceptance from the alternative film spaces in the area, Zedd published the first issue of *The Underground Film Bulletin*. His realization was that, to make a point, or to attract attention to himself and other filmmakers, the energy had to come from within the community. Through the characters of Orion Jeriko, Rufus Jacoby, Ernie Birk and sometimes Nicola Zedd, he substantiated and perpetuat-

TOTEM OF THE EGO

In his pseudo-autobiography, Bleed, Nick Zedd relates the making of Ela Troyano's Totem Of The Depraved.

A Cuban girl named Ela asked me if I'd make a film with her in which I seduce people on camera, reenacting my method of surviving on the streets. We went out looking for girls to be in the film. In front of Stromboli's on First Avenue a fat girl asked me "Are you from England?" I said "No," and started talking to her. She had a beautiful face and bright red hair. Gia lived on Bleeker Street her whole life—sixteen years. Her parents, who had long since broken up, treated her like shit when they weren't just ignoring her. She'd been living with her grandmother who had just died. I asked her if she'd want to be in a movie and she said, "Yes." The next day I was set to do two scenes; one with Gia and one with Phoebe Legere, a skinny performance artist who for years had been claiming she'd "... be on Johnny Carson next week," after her, "*Playboy* spread came out."

Without the luxury of a script, I did the scene with Gia in which I examined her jewelry and then handcuffed her and proceeded to undress her until she whispered to me that she was a virgin. I asked her if I could move in with her and she said, "Yes," so I told Ela to turn off the camera and leave. Phoebe was pissed since she'd planned to let me move in with her but hadn't yet told me.

The next day, improvising a scene with Phoebe during the

filming of *Totem Of The Depraved*, I began to understand Ela's directorial approach. She'd turn on the camera and sit back and let us do all the work. She never gave any direction and we never knew what was going on. I had to

Ela Troyano



Zedd & Gia get it on in TOTEM.

figure it all out as the camera was rolling. In a daze, Ela dropped the camera and broke a lens. I guess she forgot she was filming. When she got the film back from the lab, instead of editing it, she just threw it on a projector and pronounced it finished.

Gia and I got along alright except that whenever I stuck my dick inside her she'd start screaming hysterically. Sex was out, but I didn't care since she was letting me stay at her place for free.

After existing in several incarnations (via Xerox, and in a curiously tiny micro-mini Bible version), Zedd's *Bleed* was recently seen as one of the latest additions to Henry Rollins' line of titles available through his 2:13:61 Publications imprint. While at least as interesting as any of its publisher's efforts, *Bleed* will leave many readers craving *Deathtripping: The Cinema of Transgression* (Creation Books)—a more comprehensive, objective companion read.

ed his concept of a "Cinema of Transgression." This was an artful means of packaging a "movement" of which he became the self-appointed spokesman by dint/force of writing about it. In "The Cinema of Transgression Manifesto," Zedd declared: "There will be blood, shame, pain and ecstasy, the likes of which no one has yet imagined; none shall emerge unscathed." Ironically, the self-consciousness of this "movement" eluded many who were embraced by Zedd as a part of it. Many just laughed it off, or were so deeply entrenched in transgressive lifestyles that, like lunacy, it wasn't really possible to recognize it as such.

The Underground Film Bulletin was ultimately a massive exercise in self-promotion. Following the example of his Dada and Surrealist forbearers, Zedd had created a vehicle to establish something which, for want of a better description, became considered a movement. An upcoming book entitled *The Cinema of Transgression* by Jerri Rossi and Duane Davis, to be published this year by Primal Publishing, is testament to the historical approval such words and actions achieve over time.

Connecting with other filmmakers, Zedd pursued sexual experimentation as Nicola Zedd in a variety of expanded cinema performances. As Nicola,



• CASANDRA STARK •

REAL NAME: Roseanne Melo
BIRTHPLACE: Connecticut
AGE: ?
BEST FILMS: *We Are Not To Blame*,
Death Of An Arabian
Woman

CHILDHOOD: Nervous disorder caused bouts of uncontrollable vomiting.
DAY JOBS: Go-go dancer, babysitter, waitress.
BY FAR HER BIGGEST REGRET: Dating Nick Zedd
CURRENTLY: Struggling to be taken seriously.



Blue Star Pictures

he also collaborated with Richard Kern for "Thrust in Me," a segment from *The Manhattan Love Suicides*. Through clever cutting and simple camera tricks, Nicola kills herself, Nick gets a postmortem blow job and then jerks off over her corpse. By similar means, Nick and Nicola also both appear in Kern's *King of Sex*.

Interestingly, Zedd's ulterior motive for this cooperation was to turn the politics of filmmaking into a method of seducing others into letting him use their equipment.

Seeing Kern's *You Killed Me First* reminded Zedd that narrative films

need not be feature length and that any length was possible—provided the material was good. Returning to scripted narrative, he made *Police State* in 1987. Based on personal experience, the film trails a self-styled rebel and his torture by the hands of the NYPD during a drug sweep program called Operation Pressure Point. Opening with a brilliant shot of the title being spray painted on the back of a police car and partially shot with five rolls of out-of-date film found in an abandoned building, *Police State* is perhaps the most oppressive of Zedd's films—ending with his character's brutal castration.

His more recent work, *Whoregasm* (1988), and *War is Menstrual Envy* parts 1 & 2 (still uncompleted), are non-narrative and unscripted. According to Zedd, his choices are no longer dictated by reason but by some unseen force. He claims *War is Menstrual Envy* was made as a product of anticipating war and a wish to remind us that war is about bloodshed and is not glamorous, artificial or symbolic.

CASANDRA STARK ARRIVES

Cassandra Stark is a filmmaker whose work is fraught with religious and ritualistic overtones. Her films are poetic and disturbing in their expression of human behavior.

Appearing on the scene as Rosanne Melo, she soon found herself under the seductive spell of the seemingly "romantic" Nick Zedd. Under his watchful eye, she made (or appeared in) a series of short Super 8 films, with



"Continuity to us is when the film runs through the projector."

—THE UNDERGROUND FILM BULLETIN

titles such as *Dead On My Arm* (1985) and *Go To Hell* (1986), finishing the more sophisticated *Wrecked On Cannibal Island* in 1987. More sophisticated (at least in use of sound), the film portrays several relationships and the obsession, loneliness, fear and fascination that they contain—humorously illustrated in one scene by a faux tattoo engraved between Stark's legs reading "Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here."

In *We Are Not To Blame* (1990), the apparent strangeness of two sisters (Stark and Laura Jessen) becomes easily understood as they wreak appropriate revenge on one of their abusive husbands (Richard Kern), by tying him up and imprisoning him on their rooftop. Stark's films contain an intense personal vision also present in her paintings, writing and music. The aghast faces in *We Are Not To Blame* are reflected in the paintings by Casandra, which are included in the film. In her most recent film, *Death of an Arabian Woman* (1991), Casandra plays the title role in a personal interpretation of the anticipated perils of war from a female point of view.

THEY THOUGHT SHE WAS DEAD

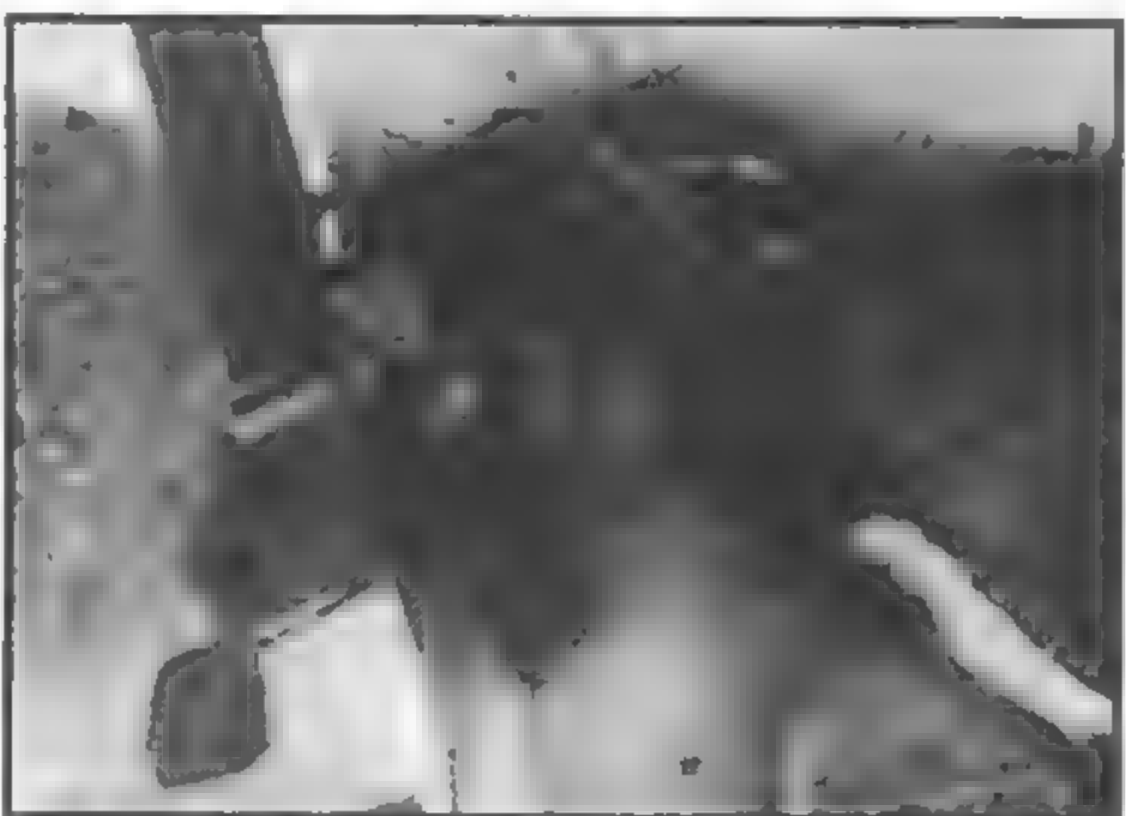
Ela Troyano puts a truly flexible approach toward moving pictures into prac-



Stark gets a beating from Natz in *WRECKED ON CANNIBAL ISLAND*.



(Above) Stark and costars with David Oimet (Below) in her most recent film, *DEATH OF AN ARABIAN WOMAN*



Photos: Blue Star Pictures

tice. A campy, celebratory outrageousness characterizes her expanded cinema performances. Showing at downtown clubs, as well as alternative art spaces, she incorporates film, slides, video, and live action into these performances, during which projectors are used like instruments—resulting in a visual jam analogous to music.

These performances, or multiple projections, were contextually varied depending on whatever technical resources available, and were mostly collaborative. Troyano did a whole series of nights at Pyramid in 1982 with David Schmidlapp. One of the larger of these performances was a four night multiple projection covering three 20 foot walls. These ambient visuals were in constant motion for 6 to 8 hours each night. This was a collaboration between Troyano, Tessa Hughes-Freeland, Andy Soma and Stephen Holman at the Kitchen for *8 B.C. Nights* (1986).

Implementing a barrage of up to 16 projectors, these projections were spontaneous and aleatory. They were often long and varied in degrees of intense lyrical grooviness, interspersed with flashes, vibrating rhythms, cuts and bursts, refractions and fusions. They involved just about anything that was projectable including feathers, creepy plastic insects, gels, mirrors and broken glass.

In 1983, Troyano made *The Bubble People*, a double projection of two unedit-

ed reels with two respective soundtracks. This was made by capturing an event or "happening." A variety of sets were put in a room, actors and crew came together and just shot whatever transpired. The camera was centrally positioned to allow maximum range of activity between the continuous sets. The actors were chosen and informed of an idea. Phoebe Legere acts the Bubble Goddess, a Marilyn Monroe-like character who comes to earth and teaches everybody to be like her. The late Jack Smith played the same role on a different day. In fact, anybody who came to the set could potentially appear.

For *Totem of the Depraved* (1984), a film in four sections, featuring Nick Zedd, Phoebe Legere, Gia Gamba and James Richardson, Troyano had a definite idea of different cinematic approaches for each section. Based on (and parodizing Andy Warhol's *My Hustler*) Nick Zedd has sexual encounters with all the characters. Gia was found on the day of the shoot, and James Richardson was just asked to show up. This spontaneity was intentional and a small scripted segment added later was an idea Nick wanted to try. (See sidebar on p. 45)

Interestingly, Zedd's dissatisfactory experience on *Totem* led to his spreading the rumor that Troyano was dead. Word of her "passing" quickly went through the community, with even close friends believing the news. The action of proclaiming his enemies "dead" soon became a standard tactic of the propaganda master—one which Zedd found annoyingly effective when FILM THREAT later ran a prank obituary about him some years later. (See interview on p. 63)

Troyano's most recent film, *Once Upon a Time in the Bronx*



REAL NAME: Lisa —

BIRTHPLACE: Minneapolis, MN

AGE: ?

BEST FILMS: *Black Monster*,
You Killed Me First,
Fingered

QUOTE: "I wasn't there during the sex scenes. I was locked away having a wonderful time eating acid."—on costarring in Kern's *Fingered*

CURRENTLY: Residing in San Francisco, making a film about dead mice.



(Below) You won't believe where Lung Leg hides her switchblade in Kern's *SUBMIT TO ME*.



(1992), was inspired by a visit to a gallery where she was attracted to an exhibit of dolls dressed as rappers and homeboys made by Ricky Rodriguez. What started out as an idea for video generated interest and developed into a larger 16mm project. It is an upbeat story of two young Puerto Ricans dealing with problems common to Latino kids growing up in the U.S.—lack of opportunities, teenage pregnancy and few role models. The film features rap songs by Latin Empire, who also act the two main characters and are musically and visually integrated into the storyline. Presently she is also working on a film about the life of Carmelita Tropicana.

THE HORROR OF PFAHLER

Breaking down the barriers between film, performance and music, Kembra Pfahler has found new name for her work, which incorporates all of the above. The name is 'Availabism,' which basically means working with anything available. Surfboard baby Pfahler was performing at all the small downtown clubs in the early '80s.

Working with her longtime partner Samoa, their performances involved mysterious rituals and psychosexual symbols dazzled with glamour and glitter, like a Las Vegas showgirl run wild and rampant. So when a camera fell into their hands, film became another medium to explore.

Pfahler's Super 8 films are colorful, elegant, hallucinatory, melancholy and fun. *Cornella, Story of a Burning Bush* (1985), is the most simple. Combining primitivism with modern consumerism, Kembra somehow reconciles two apparent opposites in the awareness of a sense of universal tribalism, where the fetishes and rituals of

humanity collide physically and ideologically in an Availablist consciousness.

Bodily adornments and bizarre physical feats represent duress and disorder in *Mild Seven*, *The Cowboy Stories* (1986), in which Kembra raises herself up off the ground, her feet attached to bowling balls, aided only by the support of two long

poles in her hands. In a 1987 performance entitled *Pussycat Bladder Waste*, she performed a bloodletting ceremony, only recently replacing blood bags for the real thing. The film *Historical*

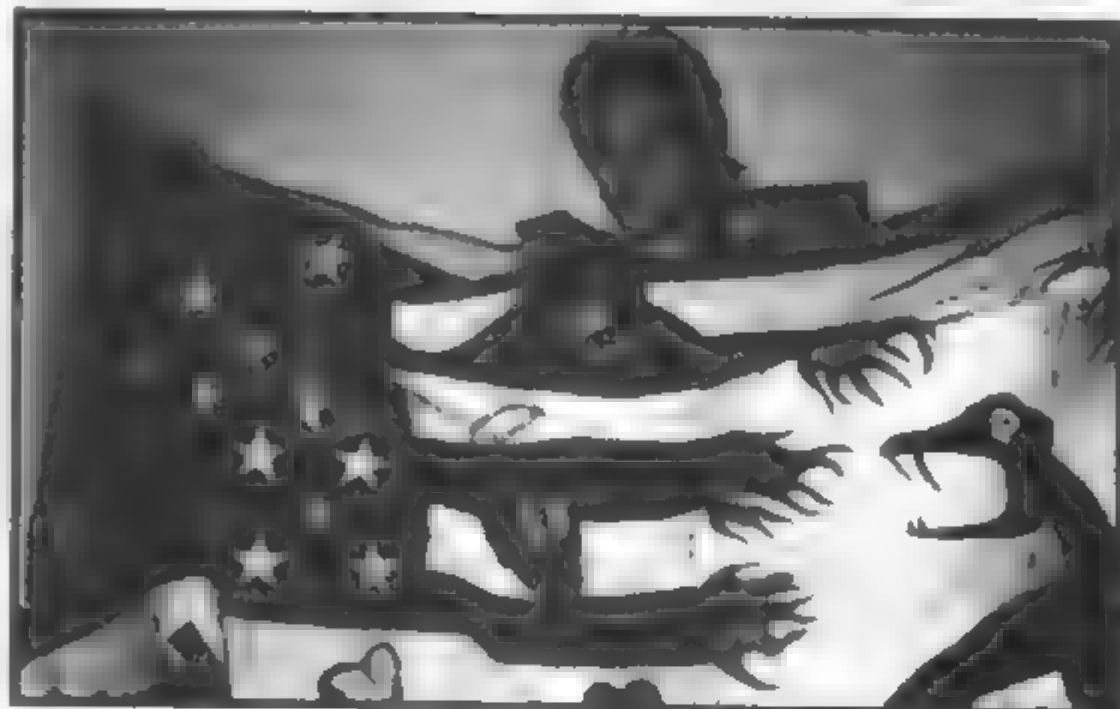
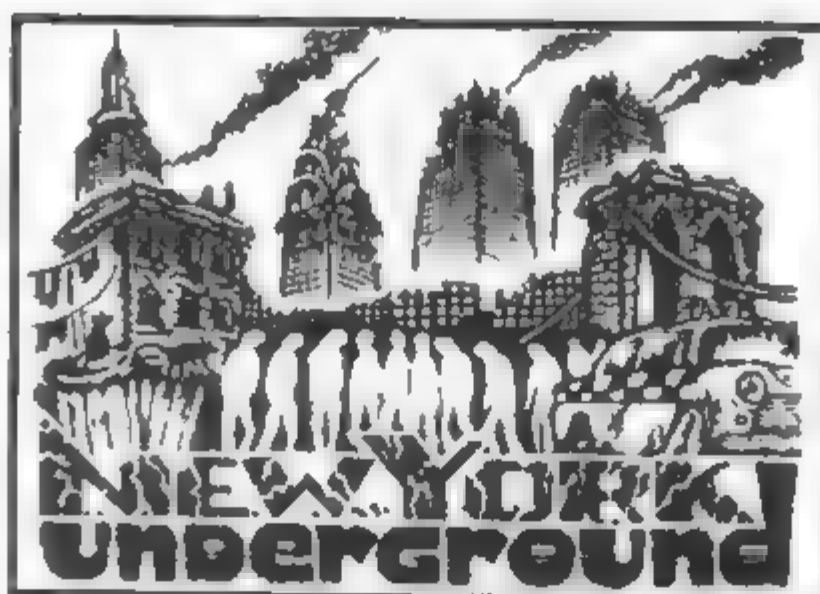
Beauty Treatments (1986), depicts the natural sources

and visceral procedures involved in beautification throughout the ages.

Pfahler's idiosyncratic alter ego Abra Kedavour, inspired by Ed Wood's *Orgy of the Dead*, is just one example of her versatile persona as a minor cultural icon. She also appears as different personalities in a variety of films: Jerri Rossi's *Anima Sola*, Ari Roussimoff's *Shadows in the City*, and Zedd's *War is Menstrual Envy* just to name a few. Most recently, Pfahler has collaborated with Richard Kern in a film about body piercing, in which she has her vagina sewn shut—albeit temporarily.

THE DEVIL MADE THEM DO IT

Where Evil Dwells, cowritten and codirected by Tommy Turner and David Wojnarowicz, is a heavy metal drama capturing the suburban Satan teen spirit. Based on the life of Ricki



(Above) Tommy Turner with a flag painting by David Wojnarowicz. (Right) Animal torture in *RAT TRAP*, a film by Turner and Tessa Hughes-Freeland.

Kasso, an 18-year-old murderer and spiritual leader of many Satanic teens in Northport, IL, *Where Evil Dwells* promised to be a feature length, action-packed Super 8 epic. In 1986, Tommy Turner described the film as being based on actual events leading to the murder of Gary Lawers and Kasso's suicide, experiences he and Wojnarowicz went through as teens and some they wish they had gone through: Black Sabbath, AC/DC, Angel Dust, vandalism, the occult, animal and human torture.

The film involved many people in its making and one scene, set in Hell, was a pure community event. Flyers were posted and circulated requesting 150 people to play the inhabitants of Hell. Shot in an abandoned warehouse in Williamsburg, there was all kinds of mayhem, pyrotechnics, and extreme physical atrocities. The

explosives experts from Survival Research Laboratories made the bombs, and Mark Gabarino did the special effects. Scott Werner starred as Ricki, Baby Gregor as Gary Lawers, artist Joe Coleman as the Devil, and Rockets Redglare, of course, was Jesus. Music plays an important part in the film and *Scraping Foetus Off The Wheel* (J.G. Thirlwell) wrote the title track

According to Tommy, he and David made the film since "most of the kids involved in this lifestyle are too out of their minds to get a camera and shoot it themselves."

As a story addressing teen suicide, among other things, this film logically followed Turner's *Simonland* (1984), which was based on cults and mass suicide like Jim Jones'



T. Hughes-Freeland

Jonestown, Guyana. Unfortunately, *Where Evil Dwells* was never completed as a feature, but does exist as a half-hour trailer. The rest of the footage reached an ill-fated destiny in an inferno on 13th Street several months ago.

As with any large indie project, the shooting of *Where Evil Dwells* took a long time. During this time, Tommy Turner and Tessa Hughes-Freeland made *Rat Trap* (1986), a twisted drug movie containing images of animal torture and human self-destruction. Its intended purpose as an anti-drug movie was pretty ironic. Turner has not made any films recently, but

has been doing some performances and was seen recently on a Boston-bound train equipped with a bucket of fresh hearts and livers.

David Wojnarowicz's Super 8 *Fire in My Belly* (1987), combines footage shot in Mexico with images from his own personal iconographic vocabulary. Wojnarowicz is an artist whose work in all disciplines: painting, writing, photography and film is highly individual, accessible, angry, compassionate and beautiful in its excellence. Parts of *Fire in My Belly* have since been reused in multi-media installations. Wojnarowicz has also made other films and videotapes with Phil Zwickler and others.

ADDING SOME EROS

Experimenting with the visceral and technical elements of film, an alchemy combined with the erotic and mythic is at the core of Bradley Eros' films and expanded cinema performances. Using disparate elements of still images, found footage, video samples and self shot film, the poetic nature of his work is substantiated by equally haunting soundtracks. A previous collaborative relationship, dubbed Erotic Psyche, consisted of Eros and Aline Mare. Mare currently lives in San Francisco, and her most recent piece is a video *S'Aline's Solution*. Now Eros collaborates with Jeanne Liotta. Their films and performances are dark, mysterious, biomorphic, psychedelic and subterranean. Utilizing optical printing and rephotography, most of the films are Super 8 though *Fungus Eroticus* (1990), was printed onto 16mm. Eros and Liotta describe themselves as "media mystics investigating cycles of decay and regeneration in the body and the world." The freedom of working with varied multimedia elements means that every performance is different in some way. Their films are incorporated into their performances which are named in the same spirit: *Liquid Hardcore Mystics*, *Wandscape*,



From the film *FUNGUS EROTICUS* (1990) by Bradley Eros and Jeanne Liotta.

Techno Spiritus and *Turning the Dragon Inside Out*, to name a few. Essentially experimental, environmental and ephemeral, the way in which they work is contextually different on every occasion yet a sensory essence is always present. This conception of images as infinitely versatile and mutable challenges the notion of film as an object that is transportable and compact. The arena in which Eros and Liotta work is one of breadth, dealing with correspondences and associations that are mystical and sensual and whose transmission is primarily psychic.

THE ONSLAUGHT OF VIDEO

The upsurge of video availability during the '80s opened up different possibilities for filmmakers just as Super 8 did in the late '70s. At this point, the incorporation of video or TV images in films is pretty much taken for granted and video distribution for films is a truly successful way to reach a wide audience. With the

growing quality and availability of video projectors, the boundaries between film and video are breaking down in many areas.

Video has a life of its own which does not really become obvious until one actually works with it. Filmmakers who have worked with both mediums like Charlie Ahearn and Beth B. both emphasize this.

Ahearn's two recent videos *Doing Time in Times Square* and *Jane in Peepland*, may seem like a far cry from *The Deadly Art of Survival* (1978), but behind the camera, the same mind is at work. Beth B.'s videos *Belladonna* (1989), *Thanatopsis* (1991) and *Stigmata* (1991) have socio-political affinities and some structural similarities with her previous Super 8 films. Now being much more developed and successful, both Beth B. and Charlie Ahearn have directed 35mm features, and may again, but continue to work on a personal uncommercial level.

It is commonplace for filmmakers to use video to edit and distribute films, and some have chosen to work

completely in this medium.

Charles Pinion, who made the skatepunk video feature *Twisted Issues*, and Annabelle Davies are presently shooting another Hi-8 horror video entitled *Red Spirit Lake*.

Davies and Tessa Hughes-Freeland are also currently in post-production on *Dirty* (1992), which is loosely based on a Bataille story and deals with aspects of obsession and degradation.

However, others, such as Nick Zedd, decry the very look of video, describing it as "looking so real that it makes everything look mundane," and opt instead to work with film.

Unfortunately, due to old prejudices, many film festivals are still leery of, and do not accept Super 8 and, short of blowing up to 16mm, video may provide an alternative means of presentation.

The intimate and matter of fact manner of Carl Michael George's *DHPG Mon Amour* (1989) locates the extraordinary conditions of living with AIDS in the late 80s. The short Super 8 documentary follows domestic preparations for a barbecue and an elaborate drug ritual necessary for the self-administration of DHPG, a treatment for the AIDS related illness CMV Retinitis. The emotional power of this film is extraordinary. The viewer is completely involved with such a degree of intimacy that it is both moving and disturbing. This film could never have been made in 16mm. However, for screening at the



Holly Adams starred with Steve O in Alyce Wittenstien's *BETAVILLE*, a witty homage to the Godard classic.

New Director's series, it had to be blown up to 16mm. Similarly, Richard Kern's *Fingered*, had to be enlarged for inclusion in the Berlin Film Festival in 1987.

Typically short of funds, Kern made the blow-up from video by pointing his camera at a television screen and rephotographing the entire film in 16mm. Crude yet effective—but best of all, cheap.

DISINTEGRATION OF THE SCENE

Within a creative community, people worked in interchangeable roles.

In making these films, people acted in each other's projects, exchanged ideas, and helped with the technical aspects. It was up to those who cared to make it work by providing showcases for film and also writing about it. But, communities do change, people leave and others arrive, and there is no reason for this one to have been any different.

Atomique Films

The steady gentrification of the area, which changed Loissaida, or the Lower East Side, into the East Village, put economic pressure on the whole community. Stricter law, license and code enforcement forced many of the small clubs to close. Rising rents made it imperative to have some form of reliable income, and AIDS awareness grew as more and more artists and performers died. Leading a life of hanging out, doing drugs and making a few bucks from a show became less viable, insufficient or nearly impossible.

Under the pressures of environmental and personal change, some active members of the film community left town. Lung Leg, maker of wonderful and weird films such as *The Worm Movie*, *Sun Puppet* and *Black Monster*, as well as poetess and often actress in Richard Kern's films, took off travelling and ended up in San Francisco. Similarly, Lydia Lunch now resides in New Orleans, where she runs the mini-empire of her independent record label and launches her spoken word tours. Meanwhile, Audrey Rose, who starred in Kern's *Submit To Me*, *The Evil Cameraman* and *Pierce*, departed

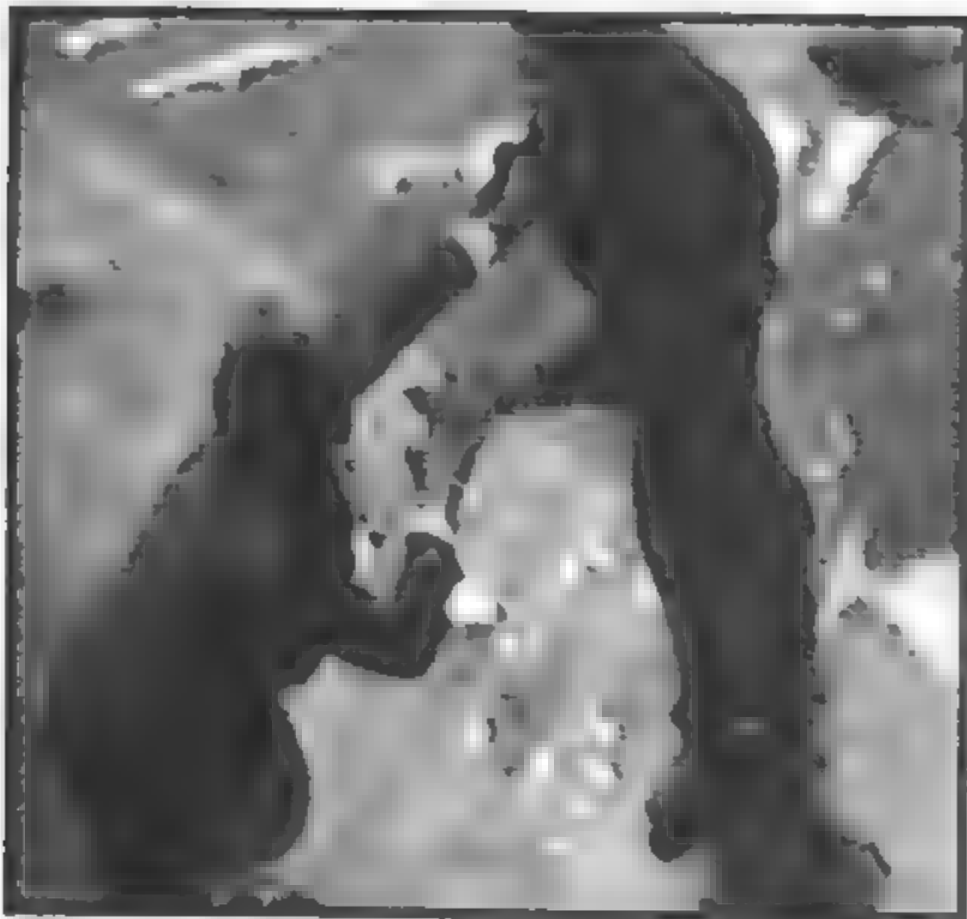
Sex and violence: Kern's fantasies permeated his films. Nätz in *SUBMIT TO ME NOW* (1987).



Foetus (J.G. Thirlwell) provided the music.



Kern And Nations on the set of **FINGERED**. (1986)



Street violence in Charlie Ahern's *DOIN' TIME IN TIMES SQUARE* (1991).

and later became a U.S. snowboarding champion.

Petty jealousies and arguments divided many of those who remained. Kern and Zedd, whose relationship was always a stormy affair, parted ways for good after Kern failed to appear at a Zedd-organized film show—leaving the audience without a night's diversion. They have not spoken since, Zedd waiting for an apology and Kern uninterested in providing one.

Time alone has made a difference. A generation of filmmakers, who in the early 80s were in their 20s, are now in their 30s. It's the beginning of a new decade, and what have they got? No money, that's for sure. The government grant cutbacks and restrictions are not new to anyone, yet an interest from Europe and Japan provides hope.

Alyce Wittenstein, maker of stylish science fiction films, *Betaville* (1987) and *No Such Thing As Gravity* (1989), is at present making *The Deflowering* the third part of her trilogy *The Propaganda of Progress*, which will be released as a feature. Wittenstein recently returned from a tour of Japan, as did Richard Kern from Denmark and Germany, and Ela

Troyano from Spain.

Despite these changes, people continue to make and show films. The New York Film Festival Downtown 1990-91 took the form of a series at Webo, a now-extinct venue. Ela Troyano produces *La Misma Onda*, a showcase for Latino film and performance at PS 122.

Recently, there was a two night film series at CBGB's Gallery, and Matthew Harrison's Film Crash program circulates

shows of primarily 16mm film in various venues. The Anthology Film Archives reopened in 1989, after being closed for seven years. Run by Jonas Mekas, a filmmaker himself, this provides a showplace for many filmmakers.

Contributing to this renewal is a decline of drug use within the once perpetually mind-altered community—the perception about those who do still indulge becoming one of disrespect for their lack of self-control. As one anonymous filmmaker says, "It's a lot different now that we aren't so fucked up."

Nothing can replace the experiences these filmmakers have gone through, nor diminish the importance of their work. They, as well as others like Michael Wolfe, M. Henry Jones and Jon Moritsugu, are dedicated to expressing themselves. And, so long as they are inspired by the horrors and perversity of New York City, they will make films there.

Fortunately, we can watch them, in safety, from here. **[HYG]**





THE FILMS OF RICHARD KERN

VOLUME ONE

THE MANHATTAN
LOVE SUICIDES (1985)
THE RIGHT SIDE
OF MY BRAIN (1984)
YOU KILLED ME FIRST (1985)
SUBMIT TO ME (1985)
DEATH VALLEY 69 (1986)
NAZI (1991)

VOLUME TWO

GOODBYE 42ND STREET (1983)
THE KING OF SEX (1986)
FINGERED (1986)
SUBMIT TO ME NOW (1987)
THE EVIL CAMERAMAN (1987-90)
X IS Y (1990)
MONEYLOVE (1991)
PIERCE (1985)

"Kern seemingly aspires to be the
downtown David Cronenberg."

—J. HOBERMAN, THE VILLAGE VOICE

"Kern gets some of the most horrific
images since David Lynch's *Eraserhead*."

—THE LOS ANGELES TIMES



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FILM
THREAT
V I D E O



"There are good pedophiles and there are bad pedophiles. We are good pedophiles."

—Roy Radow, Spokesman
for NAMBLA

"I told him that I wanted to follow him everywhere, I wanted to be his shadow, I wanted to document everything he did. But I scared him"

—documentarian Adi Sideman on
approaching NAMBLA

TO NAMBLA OR NOT TO NAMBLA

With his stunning NAMBLA documentary CHICKEN HAWK, filmmaker Adi Sideman may be taking objectivity to a new level.

by Dominic Griffin

WHILE ATTENDING A SEXUAL diversity class as a college senior, Israeli native Adi Sideman first heard about NAMBLA; or the North American Man Boy Love Association. Instantly, he knew he had to document these men and their strange ways.

NAMBLA currently has over a thousand members and their goal, according to press releases, is to legalize relationships between grown men and young boys. If you are still reading, then you can understand the filmmakers curiosity.

Only two years previous Adi was back in his native homeland finishing up a mandatory stretch in the Israeli army as a Sgt. Major in the paratroopers. After arriving in New York he enrolled in the prestigious NYU film school.

Originally, Sideman's documentary *Chicken Hawk* started as a fifteen minute

piece while Adi was in his sophomore year but became a much larger project after Adi's fascination grew and his ability to get closer to NAMBLA members increased—though members were at first wary of this brave Israeli filmmaker. "At first I called the NAMBLA hotline and I spoke to Renato (Corazza) [Well known to Howard Stern listeners: "If you are a boy lover..."] but I was totally unprofessional. I told him that I wanted to follow him everywhere, I wanted to be his shadow, I wanted to document everything he did. But I scared him". However Renato put him in touch with another NAMBLA member by the name of Leyland Stevenson who became much more co-operative. Leyland had already done a stretch for distribution of child pornography but he was eager to spread the word of his organization.

Both Renato and Leyland are heavily featured in *Chicken Hawk*. Along with this pair, more pedophiles are featured including renowned American poet, Allan Ginsberg. To balance out his documentary which is shot entirely on video, Sideman included a segment on Straight Kids USA

Their goal is to make NAMBLA a non-entity (Read: eliminate).

Sideman retains a remarkable level of objectivity through out this piece. He never calls shots and purely presents the facts. Even his parents expressed their wishes in hindsight that he should have showed his true opinion. It is precisely this approach that has annoyed so many but Sideman does concede in interviews that their sexual desires are rather sick but he felt it was his responsibility as a documentarian to not take sides but rather allow the viewer to make up their own minds.

Together with his camera man and co-editor, Nadav Harel, they focus on the lives of five NAMBLA members as they try and convince all pedophiles to come out of the closet and fight for their right within American society.

All the pedophiles featured, believe that the problem is not with their sexual preferences but instead with the laws that prohibit them. As Leyland so eloquently puts it, "People look dumbly at the age of the participant rather than at the intelligence or quality of the relationship."



As Leyland goes on to explain, "Just because some people may know a fifteen year old boy who is not quite sure of his sexuality doesn't mean every young boy doesn't know".

COMING OUT

Sideman started this project in early 1993 with a 3/4 video camera and recorder that he borrowed from school. This clunky piece of equipment didn't do a great job according to Adi and he found himself having to do re-shoots after ten months of filming! Unable to again get hold of his clunky 3/4, he borrowed a small Hi-8 camera which made a great difference, because of the the *verite* style he used. As Adi explains, "I guess the big camera put them off but as soon as I started using the Hi-8, they all just opened up". (Eventually Adi and his cohort shot thirty hours of tape with a total cost through post production of fifteen thousand dollars)

Indeed, in the film, Adi manages to get Leyland flirting with a near fifteen year-old in a parking lot. This incident, Leyland will later describe as "really

beautiful". Also within *CH* are some scenes of well respected poet, Allan Ginsberg, reading one of his own compositions, "Young Boy, Give Me Your Ass"

If there is a star of this documentary, it is Leyland. His soft-toned voice could be that of a friendly uncle or that of a Hollywood-movie-type creep. There's a mystery behind his dolce tones. The fifty five year old currently resides in New York and works for a publisher but he is a member of the New York State Bar Association and has worked frequently within the financial markets of The Big Apple. When asked if he is gay, he tells, "Well, yes I'm attracted to men more than women", but he claims that he has had

**"Just because some people may know a fifteen year old boy who is not quite sure of his sexuality doesn't mean every young boy doesn't know"—CONFESSED PEDOPHILE
LEYLAND STEVENSON**

relationships with women and doesn't rule one out in the future. But his favorite is small pubescent teenage boys, he proudly states. "I find that adolescent boys are extremely attractive in many ways. They have a refreshing atmosphere about them, they're vivacious and full of vitality. But I can't tell you a specific type of young teenage boy that I like, that'd be like me asking you why you like strawberry cake!"

Todd Phillips, of the film's theatrical distribution company, Stranger Than Fiction Films (and always willing to voice an opinion) counters, "With Leyland, he likes a combination: The spirit of TV's *Webster* juxtaposed with Macauley Culkin's good looks."

SHOCKING TIMES

When Sideman eventually screened his film at NYU, people were just a little shocked, surprisingly enough. "They were not happy with the focus on pedophiles", he laments. "But I didn't look for victims, that's been done before besides I couldn't find any children that had been molested by NAMBLA members and I certainly wasn't going to advertise for them in the



**"We knew
he was
kinda
weird."**

**—MIKE
REFERRING TO
THE AGING
PEDOPHILE**



**"He's in that
wonderful limbo
between child and
adolescent. They both
went out of their way
to flirt with me."**

**—LEYLAND STEVENSON
REFERRING TO A PAIR OF
PROSPECTIVE COMPANIONS**

newspapers." Despite earning the chagrin of many at his school, the film did win Best Documentary at the New York Underground Film Festival and ironically went to win two more awards at the Fest: Best Director and Best Achievement.

The gay community hasn't really endeared itself to the film either. As Adi explains, "There was a reluctance within the gay community to give a statement regarding NAMBLA and when I did show it to activists, they said it was going to hurt them. They felt they would be tarnished with the same brush." As the theatrical distributor, Phillips agrees that gay people have been wrongly associated with NAMBLA. "They [NAMBLA] like to hide under a gay blanket which is unfair," says the director of the famed GG Allin documentary, *Hated*.

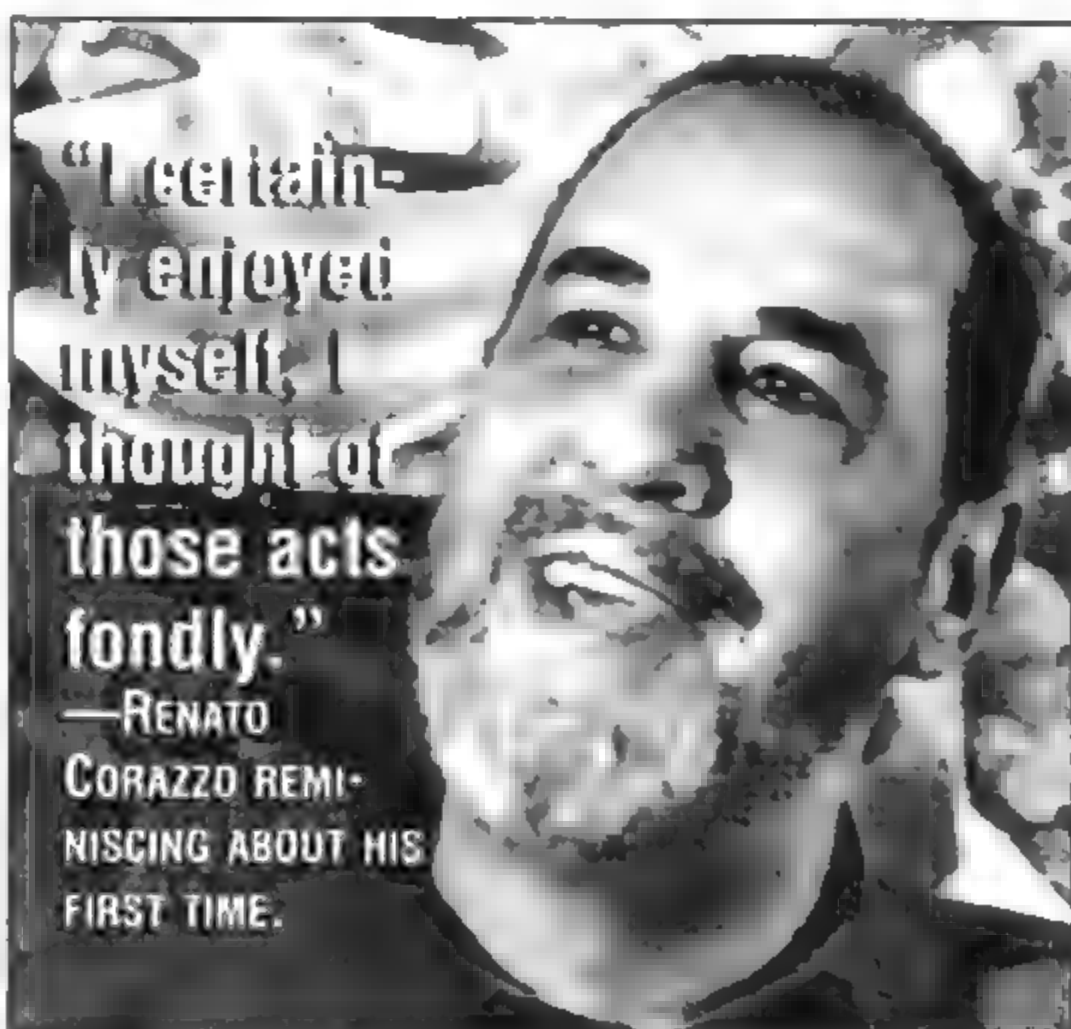
However, Todd, always a man with a terrifically sick sense of humor, jokes that he plans on "marketing the movie to Boy Scouts and pedophiles alike," before stating seriously that the gay community are interested in this film and will buy tickets. "Look, we're not showing this in Kentucky—the film deserves to be seen, it's a great documentary," the twenty-six year old entrepreneur says. When asked how his partner, Andrew Gurland, felt about the film, Todd said, "NAMBLA is cool, according to Andrew."



**THEY'RE HERE.
THEY'RE ..**

Whatever your feelings are regarding the content of this film and its lack of subjective opinion towards a sick subject, it should be seen for its boldness, intelligence and controversy. It proves a very insightful piece and if by chance you happen to be a parent you should be aware that these people exist out there.

USA



**"I certainly
enjoyed
myself, I
thought of
those acts
fondly."**

**—RENATO
CORAZZO REMI-
NISCING ABOUT HIS
FIRST TIME.**



LEYLAND MISCONSTRUES A PHONE PRANK INTO A PRECOCIOUS COME-ON. HE LATER DESCRIBES THE MINIMAL ENCOUNTER AS "BEAUTIFUL."

be five, six, seven, and three. Leyland claims, "I don't like them that young," implying that his type is more of the teenage variety. However Phillips says, "I've looked through the NAMBLA bulletins and I see boys of this age all the time."

Currently, Phillips, Gurland and director Alex Crawford are busy finishing *Porn American Style*, a documentary that focuses on the adult video industry and especially, porn pioneer, Al Goldstein [Covered expertly by David E. Williams in FTVG #9.]

Always looking for extreme subject matter, Phillips, who claims to be well respected and established within the New York swinging community (and who are we to doubt him) hopes to one day document these free form ultra-liberals. "It's my ultimate wish. It's a fascinating lifestyle that I subscribe too," he proudly gloats. **[78]**

EVEN STRANGER THAN FICTION

Upon first seeing the film, *Stranger Than Fiction* Films knew *Chicken Hawk* was for them. Owned and run by Todd Phillips and Andrew Gurland, they have managed to get the film into select (and we mean *select*) theatres in some of the more liberal major cities across this great country of ours.

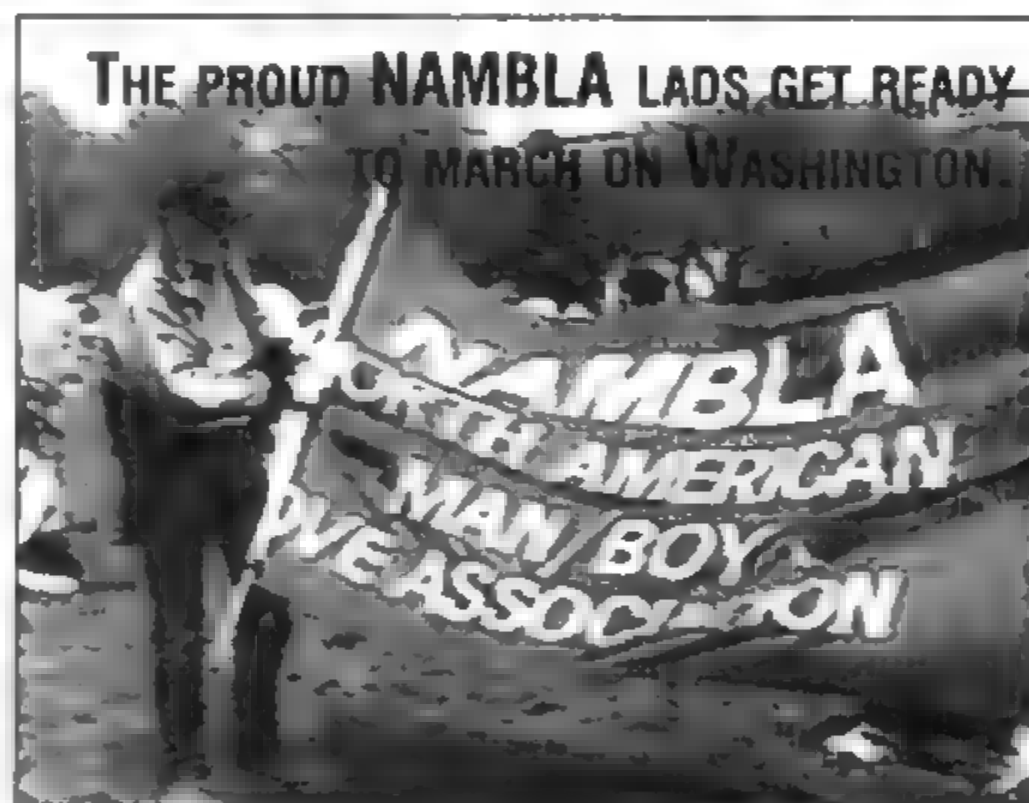
Avid readers of FTVG shouldn't be unfamiliar with our buddy, Todd. He was the fine individual (along with Alex Crawford) responsible for the excellent and also controversial documentary *Hated*. But despite how radical and angry a person GG Allin was to focus your camera on, NAMBLA proved a whole different ball game.

After the success of *Hated*, Phillips set up *Stranger Than Fiction* Films with partner Gurland. "We are building a company based on controversial films, not shying away from anything and *Chicken Hawk* was perfect," Phillips explains. He adds, with tongue firmly planted in cheek, "It was our responsibility to carry it." Phillips then goes on to share his own experiences with regard to the subject matter. "I must add that one of the other primary reasons for carrying this film is that when I was a young boy, I was taken

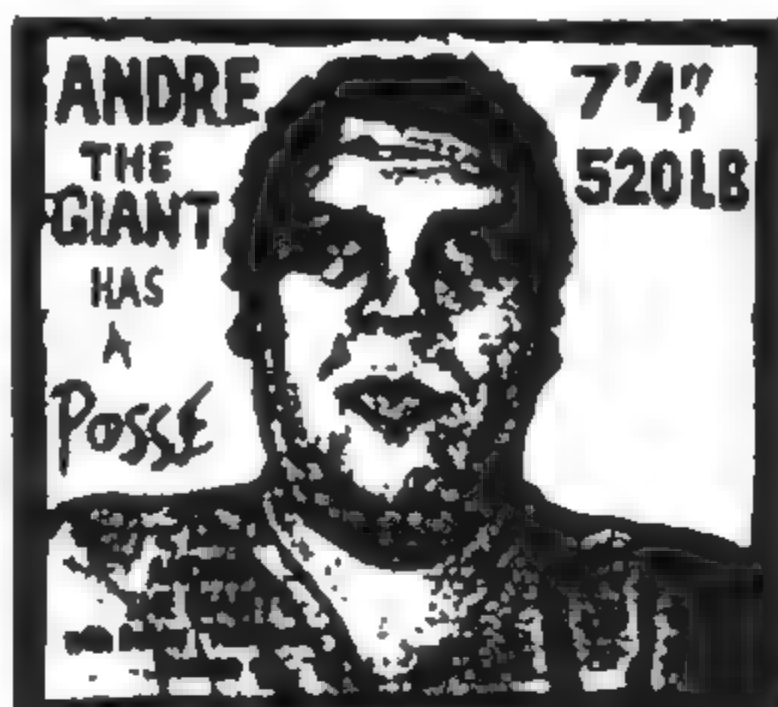
out to the woods behind my house by a neighbor named Steve," he adds with tears welling in his eyes.

After a break to collect his composure, Phillips returns to his funny mode and says he jokingly played with the idea using the slogan "Don't Leave This Homo Alone With Your Boy" on the theatrical poster, but decided "It wasn't funny beyond the confines of my office."

Even though he omitted this particular sentence from the marketing strategy, Phillips has come under criticism regarding the *CH* movie poster. It features a picture of the documentary's star, Leyland Stevenson, surrounded by young boys whose average age appear to



"HEY RENATO, COME ON OUT, BABY-RAPER! SHOW YOUR FACE, WE'RE GONNA HAVE A BLOCK PARTY!" — TOM McDONOUGH, LEADER OF ANTI-NAMBLA GROUP STRAIGHT KIDS USA



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(BNY222) Are you ready for suicide? See this tape first! Marvel at the stunning perversity of *The Operation*, get grossed-out by the ultra-brutality of *Deinstag*, party with Satan in *Brouhaha* and get twisted with the rest of this healthy slice of independent film madness! Note: This tape contains extremely graphic violence and sexual situations. ADULTS ONLY. (90 min.) \$29.95

CHICKENHAWK: MEN WHO LOVE BOYS (CHK153) Parents fear them. The FBI hunts them. Young boys excite them. Learn the horrible truth about the National Association of Man/Boy Love (NAMBLA) in director Adi Sideman's shocking expose on the pedophilia underworld. "The most unnerving film since *Psycho*" —*NY Post*, "Never less than totally gripping" —*LA Weekly*, "Fascinating, frightening and important" —*NY Newsday* (60 min.) \$34.95 Note: This film contains really freaky innuendo that will turn your stomach. ADULTS ONLY.

CORPSE FUCKING ART (CFA122) Interviews and behind-the-scenes footage explain *Nekromantik* director Jorg Buttgerit's cinematrocities—with stills, gore effect secrets and unreleased scenes. Includes short *Hot Love*! (90 min.) \$29.95 Note: This tape contains graphic violence and some nudity. ADULTS ONLY.

THE DEATH KING (DKG106) Seven suicides make for a week of bizarre horror from *Nekromantik*

director Jorg Buttgerit. Features a gruesome Nazi torture scene not for the squeamish! (80 min./English subtitles) \$29.95 Note: This film contains graphic violence and nudity. ADULTS ONLY.

HARDCORE: THE FILMS OF RICHARD KERN VOL I (HCR107) This compilation includes such evil NY-underground classics as *You Killed Me First*, *Submit To Me*, and *The Right Side of My Brain* specially edited by Kern exclusively for FTV. Features Lydia Lunch, Lung Leg, Henry Rollins and music by Foetus. (90 min.) \$29.95 Note: This tape contains graphic sexual situations and violence. ADULTS ONLY.

HARDCORE: KERN VOL II (HCR111) Another exclusive collection. Includes the legendary Lydia Lunch collaboration *Fingered* (a John Waters favorite) Nick Zedd as the *King of Sex* and the notorious short *The Evil Cameraman*. Featuring music by Sonic Youth and Foetus. One of our best sellers! (90 min.) \$29.95 Note: This tape contains very graphic sexual violence and nudity. ADULTS ONLY.

HATED: GG ALLIN & THE MURDER JUNKIES (HAT132) Completed just before his death, *Hated* captures all the sound and fury that was GG Allin—who broke parole to appear in the film. Here is not only Allin's live act that drew the curious, but the injuries, police activity and rock 'n' roll savagery that is his legacy. Also contains exclusive footage of Allin's equally unusual funeral! (60 min.) \$24.95 Note: This film contains graphic sexual situations and violence. ADULTS ONLY.

MALICIOUS INTENT (MAL 149) Lydia Lunch assaults all you hold dear in this stunning three part LIVE performance tape that challenges not only the audience, but the entire sexist, racist, violence-prone world that inspires her poetic savagery. A must-have for all serious followers. (90 min.) \$29.95 Note: This tape includes descriptions of graphic sex and violence. ADULTS ONLY.

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MY SWEET SATAN (MSS150) Cult horror director Jim Van Bebber tackles violence, drugs and heavy metal in this shocking tale of Satanic worship gone amok. SUPER GRAPHIC and gut-gagging, this tape includes a remastered version of *Roadkill: The Last Days of John Martin* and the druggie documentary *Doper*. The all-time highest rated film by Joe Bob Briggs' Underground Film Committee "Scores a perfect 100 on the vomit meter...four stars, Joe Bob says check it out." (60 min.) \$24.95 Note: This tape includes scenes of graphic violence. ADULTS ONLY.

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NEW! SCHRAMM (SCH155) The latest film from *Nekromantik* director Jorg Buttgerit! See the world through the fevered eyes of serial killer Lothar Schramm (Florian Koerner von Gustorf) as he attempts to satisfy his urge to kill—and deal with his genuine love for the prostitute next door (*Nekromantik 2*'s Monika M.). A surreal, expertly-crafted and altogether different take on the genre, this film is a must. (90 min.) \$29.95 Note: This film includes scenes of graphic sex and violence. ADULTS ONLY.

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